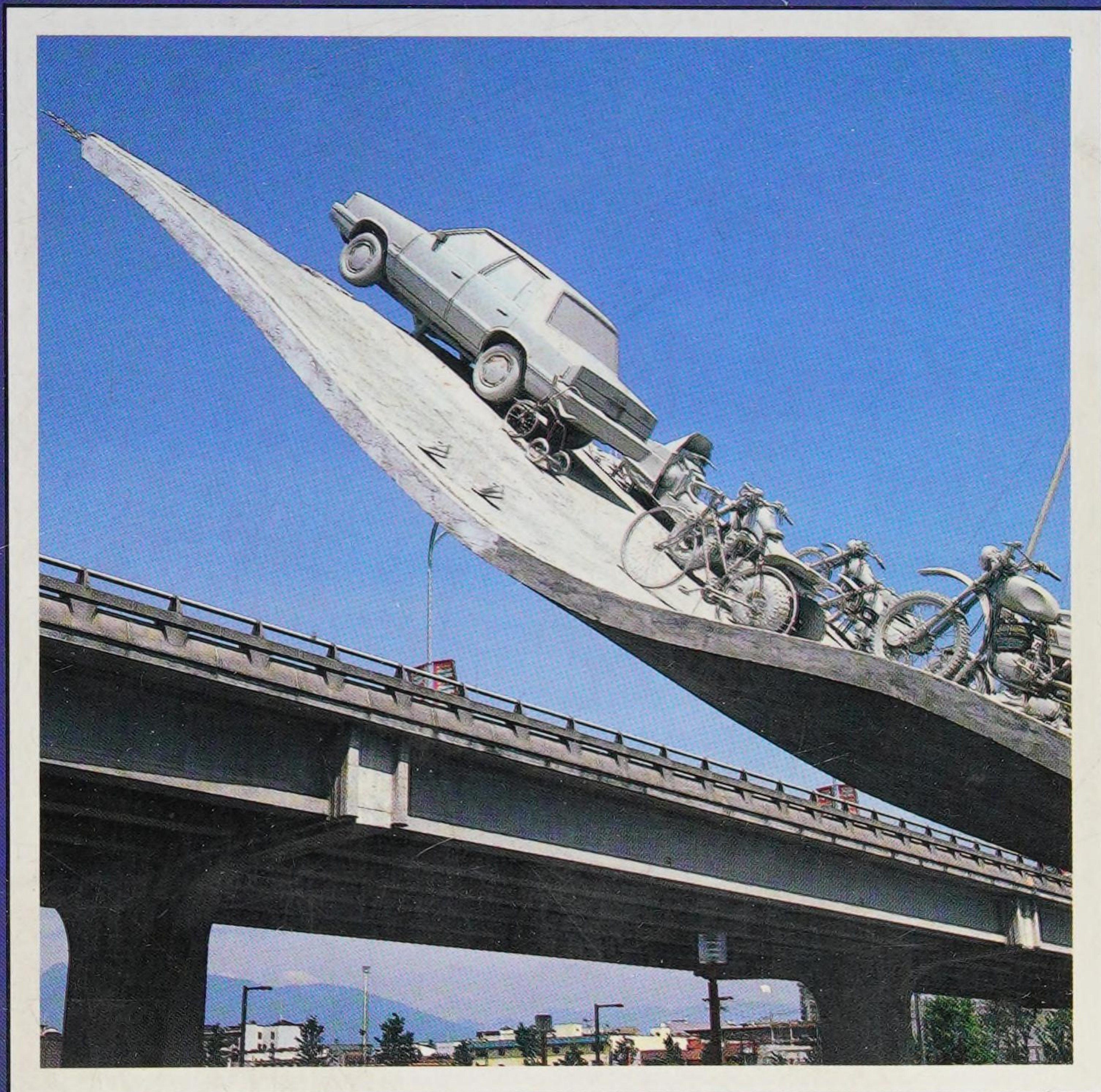


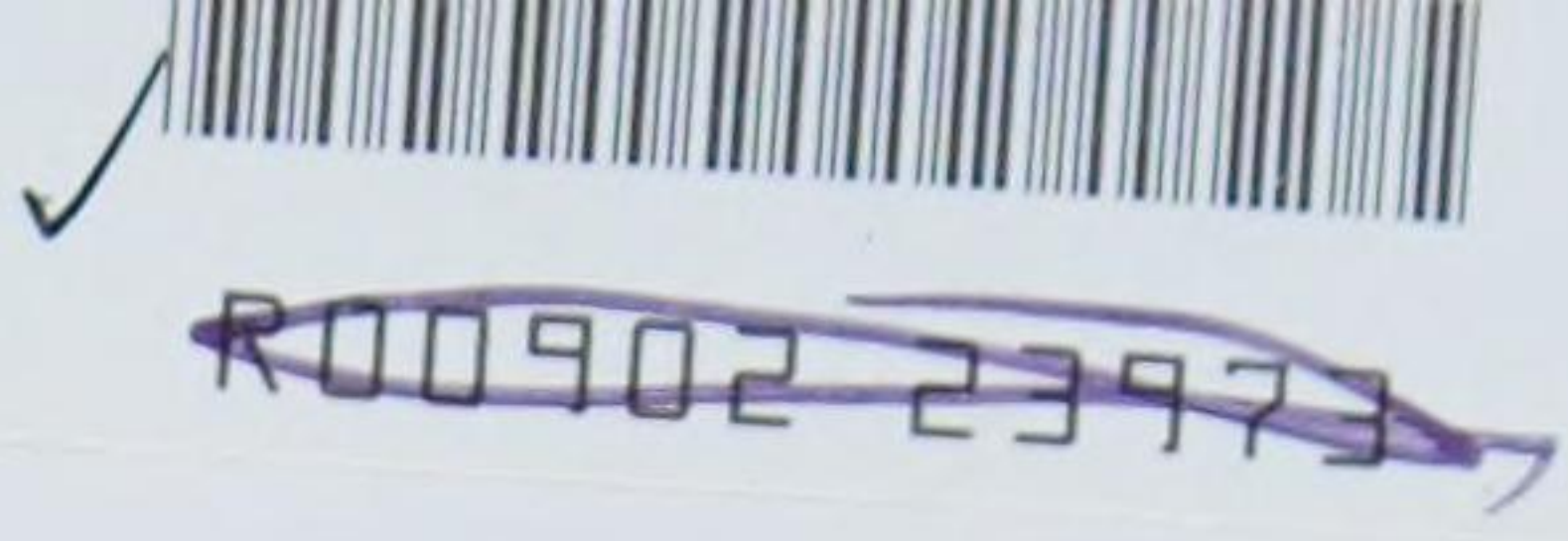
SITE



Foreword by James Wines
Interview by Herbert Muschamp

RIZZOLI
NEW YORK

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RIZZOLI
NEW YORK

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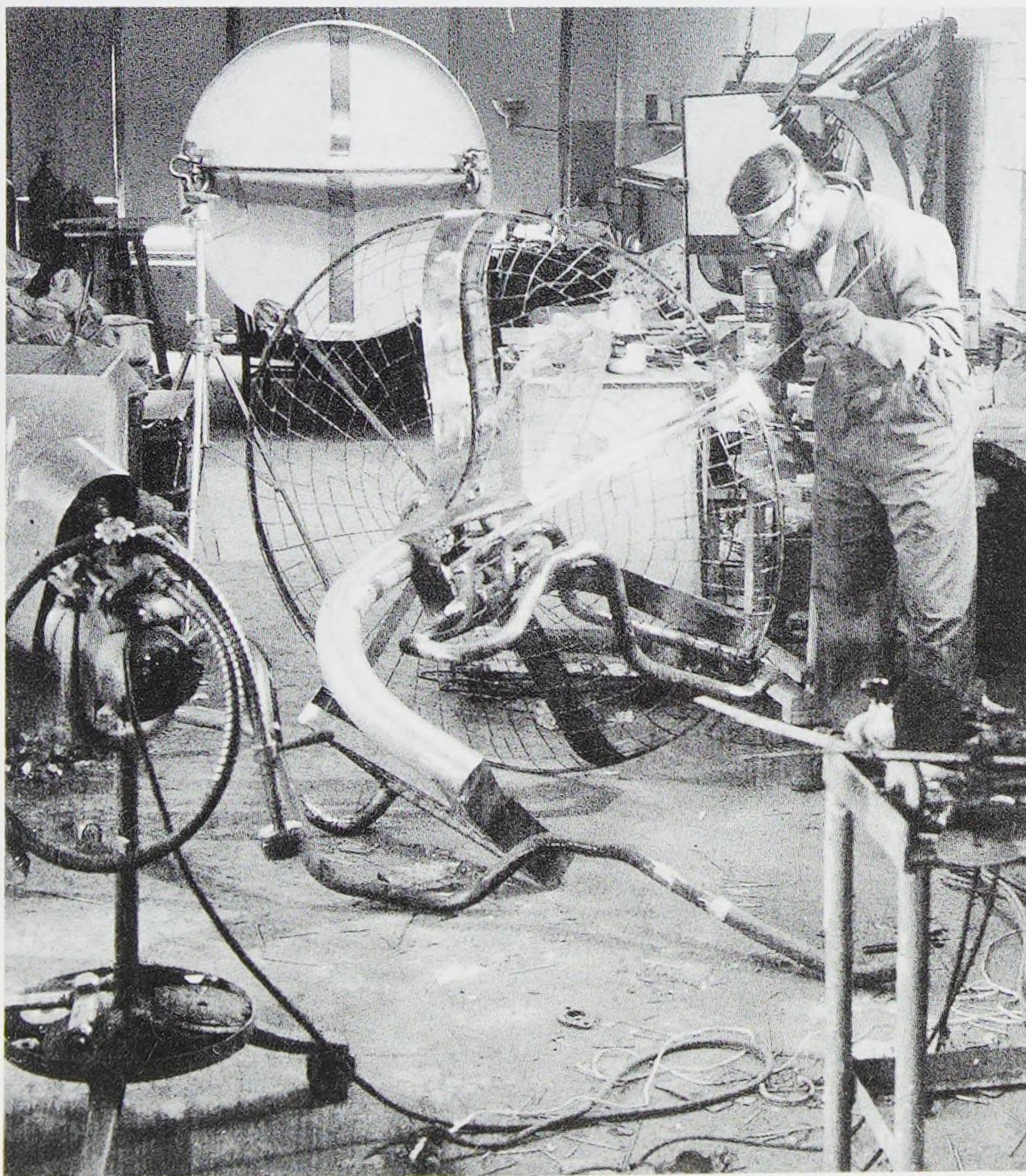
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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BEGINNINGS OF SITE (1969 to 1977)

by James Wines

The early groundwork for the formation of SITE was laid in the late 1960s through a series of critical discussions held in a sculpture class I was teaching at New York University. These beginnings led to a more philosophically directed dialogue with the sculptor and poet Alison Sky in 1969. At that time I was engaged in proposals for environmental art pieces in steel and concrete for hypothetical landscape sites, and Alison was experimenting with the relationship between written and three-dimensional poetry. We were both in a transitional period in our work that reflected the effects of an explosive decade of social and political unrest. In the visual arts, one manifestation of this climate was a dissatisfaction with the prevailing definitions of painting, sculpture, and architecture and an advocacy of cross-fertilization, hybridism, and dematerialization. We were part of a general cultural rebellion that seemed intent on eliminating the traditional distinctions between the arts. Public art and architecture, however, appeared to be the least affected by this revolution.

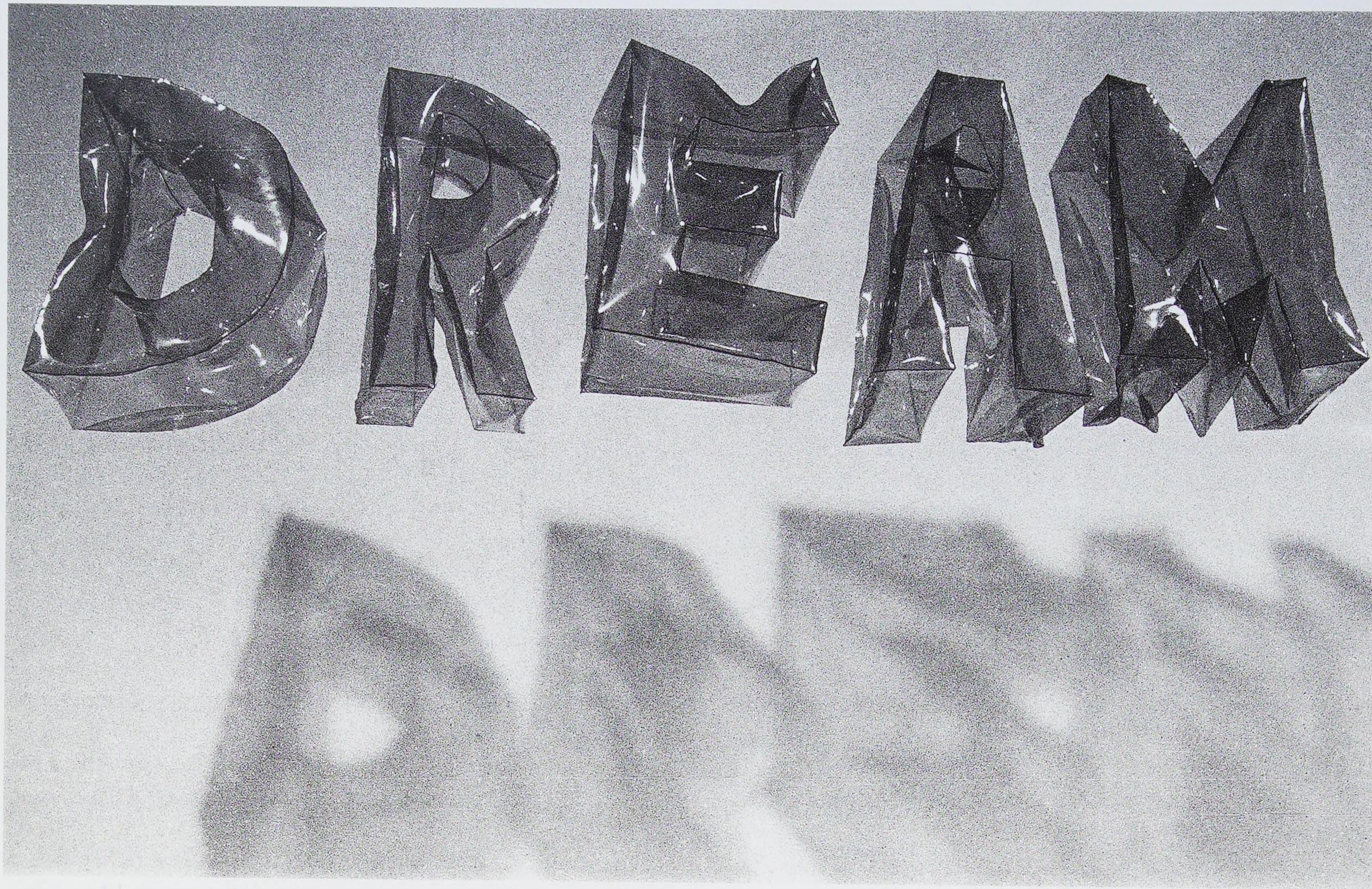


James Wines's studio on Broome Street, New York City, 1964

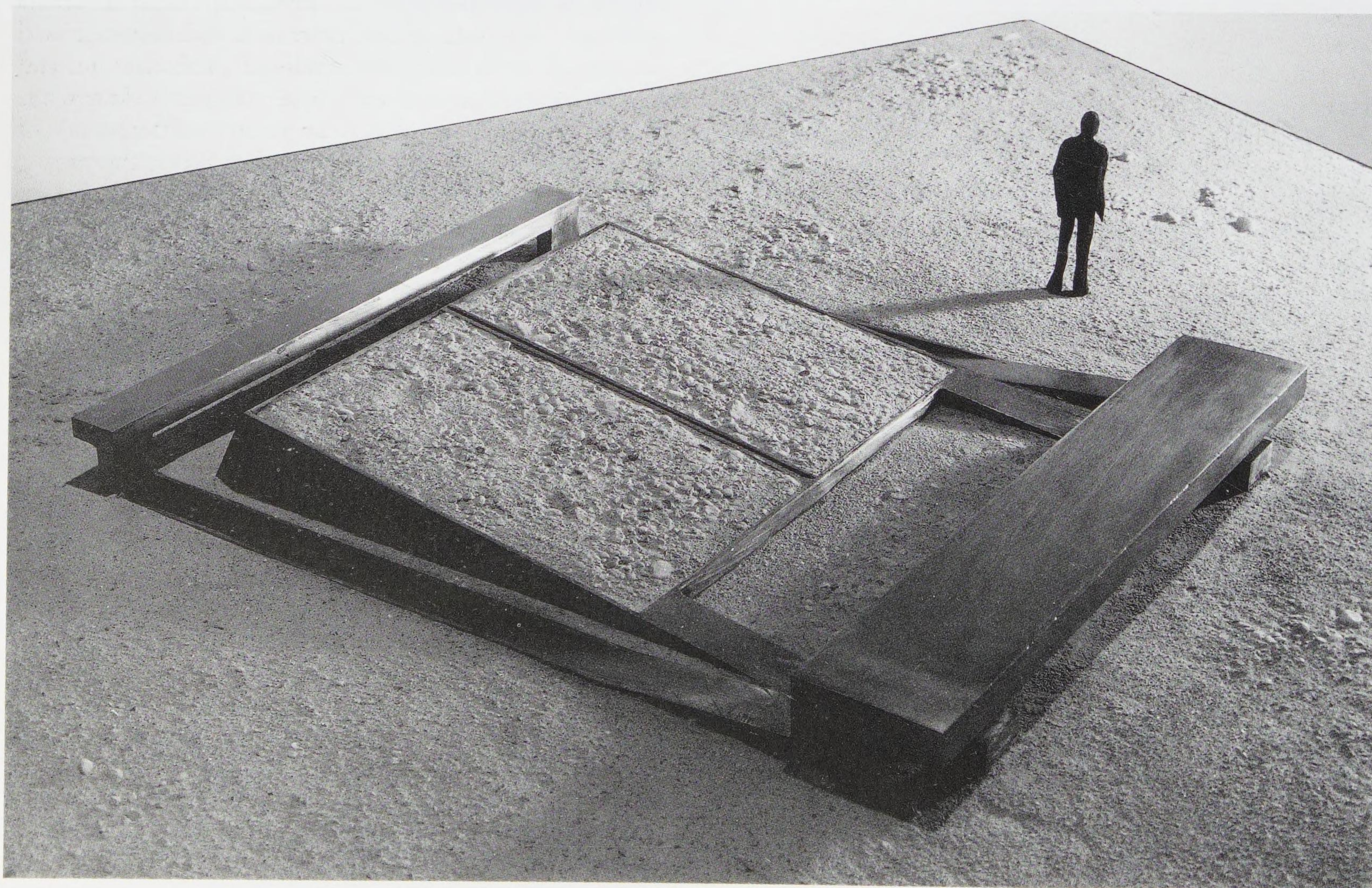
Alison Sky and I met in 1965 in a sculpture foundry where I was completing a group of bronze works commissioned for corporate plazas. Uneasy with the sculptor's role as the creator of accessories to buildings, I had begun to develop scale models of Constructivist-influenced interventions for architecture and landscape that proposed some new alternatives for joining art, architecture, and context. At the same time, Alison was working on a series of transparent word pieces in soft and hard plastics that were intended to bridge the gap between language as a graphic representation of ideas and language as a physical manifestation of itself and its meanings. She was also experimenting with an expanded notion of poetry, using some of the communication techniques of popular media and the scale of billboard advertising.

As our dialogue continued, we found that we shared a discontent with the isolation of artists from public life typical of culture in this century. Continuing to produce aesthetic objects for exhibition when the streets and the parks offered such rich sources of inspiration for a fresh vision of public art seemed to be a creative dead end. Although the environmental art movement of the late 1960s generated projects that dealt with the open land and sculpture that simulated architectural enclosures, very few artists were interested in developing ideas for commonplace, heavily populated urban centers. Alison and I found ourselves increasingly attracted to those periods of history when art and architecture were conceptually and philosophically integrated to provide a communicative iconography for buildings and spaces. But because neither of us had been formally trained as an architect, we concentrated our early experiments on the uses of visual art in the cityscape.

The more formal beginnings of SITE came out of weekly dialogues among a group of artists who met in my Manhattan studio on Greene Street in late 1969. Some of these original participants were members of my New York University class, while others were friends who shared a dissatisfaction with the state of visual art in the built environment. We were united in our desire to produce work that somehow related to architecture but clearly existed outside the usual confines of exhibition space in galleries or museums. This brought us into alignment with certain earth artists, conceptual artists, and experimental architects who were resisting the influence of formalist modern design. Like them, we were searching for a more potent and socially significant content, a new public imagery drawn from public life, and a more



"Dream" by Alison Sky, sewn vinyl, 1969



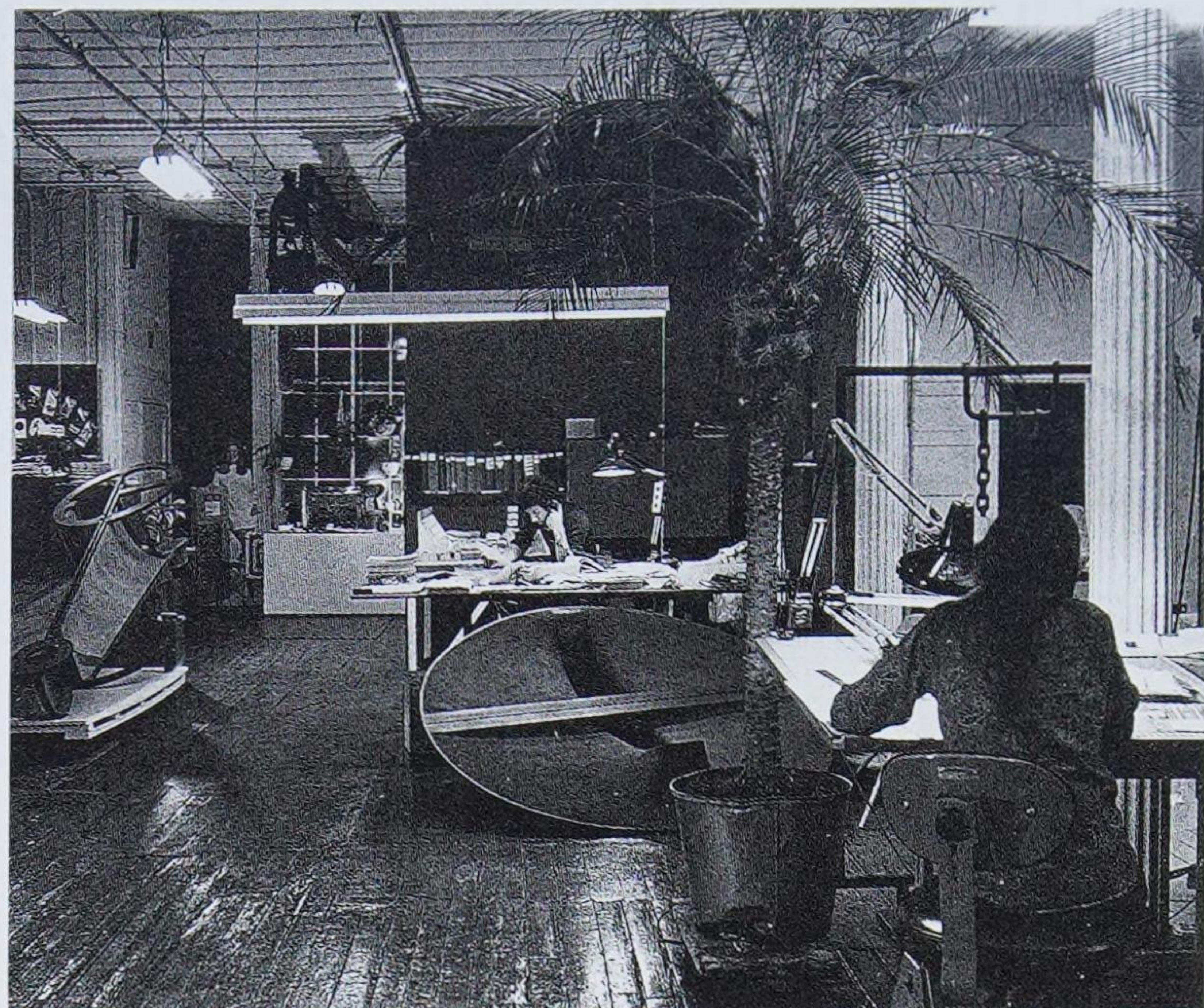
Model of landsite sculpture by James Wines, 1968

integrated fusion of the arts. Everyone in the early pre-SITE discussions felt the need for a strengthened public language that would be more responsive to a disordered and pluralistic society or what was then commonly referred to as the “post-industrial world.”

In 1970 we decided that to pay further lip service to public art was futile and that the cause needed documentation, research, and an organized structure to offer services for building real projects. A charter was drawn, objectives were defined, and an organization was formed. Originally called SITE (Sculpture in the Environment), the group later abbreviated its name to SITE when it appeared that most of our projects were more architecture than sculpture. The purpose of this nascent group was to produce publications, position papers, and both theoretical and actual concepts for the urban visual environment. Early members of the team included artist Dana Draper, artist and writer Nancy Goldring, artist Cynthia Eardley, and a number of students who helped with research and general organization. Michelle Stone, with a background in art, sociology, and photography, and architect Emilio Sousa joined SITE a year later. Since few prospects for building existed, the organization qualified for nonprofit status, surviving for the first few years on grants from federal and private organizations.

During this early period, SITE focused on two major areas: assembling and publishing information on recent tendencies in public art and architecture, and trying to secure commissions. In order to document ideas and projects, we started a publication series under the general title “ON SITE,” edited by Alison Sky and Michelle Stone. This periodical, first produced as a pamphlet, grew to book size as our contacts and readership expanded. Its primary value, besides presenting a great deal of work by artists and architects that would never have been published in the more mainstream reviews, was the opportunity it provided for dialogue with artists in Europe, Asia, and South America. We came into contact with colleagues of similar interests around the world, including artists Vito Acconci, Alice Aycock, Robert Smithson, Gordon Matta-Clark, Nancy Holt, Juan Downey, and Alan Sonfist and architects Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, Peter Cook, Gianni Pettena, Emilio Ambasz, Coop Himmelblau, and Antfarm.

Virtually all of the first projects by SITE, from 1970 to 1974, could be classified as environmental art, with the exception of the Peeling Project for Best Products and the melting housing complex in Peekskill, New York. In each case the intention was to use buildings as a point of reference (or a kind of foil) for a new relationship between art and architecture. In our view, most edifices built in the modernist tradition since 1950 had lost all cultural and contextual meaning because of their dependency on the tired, academic principles of formalist design. We concluded that architecture itself should serve as the subject matter or raw material for art. Since many people tended to see Bauhaus-derived structures as nothing more than anonymous backdrops in their environment, our position seemed fortified by popular opinion as well as by the ever-growing opposition of a

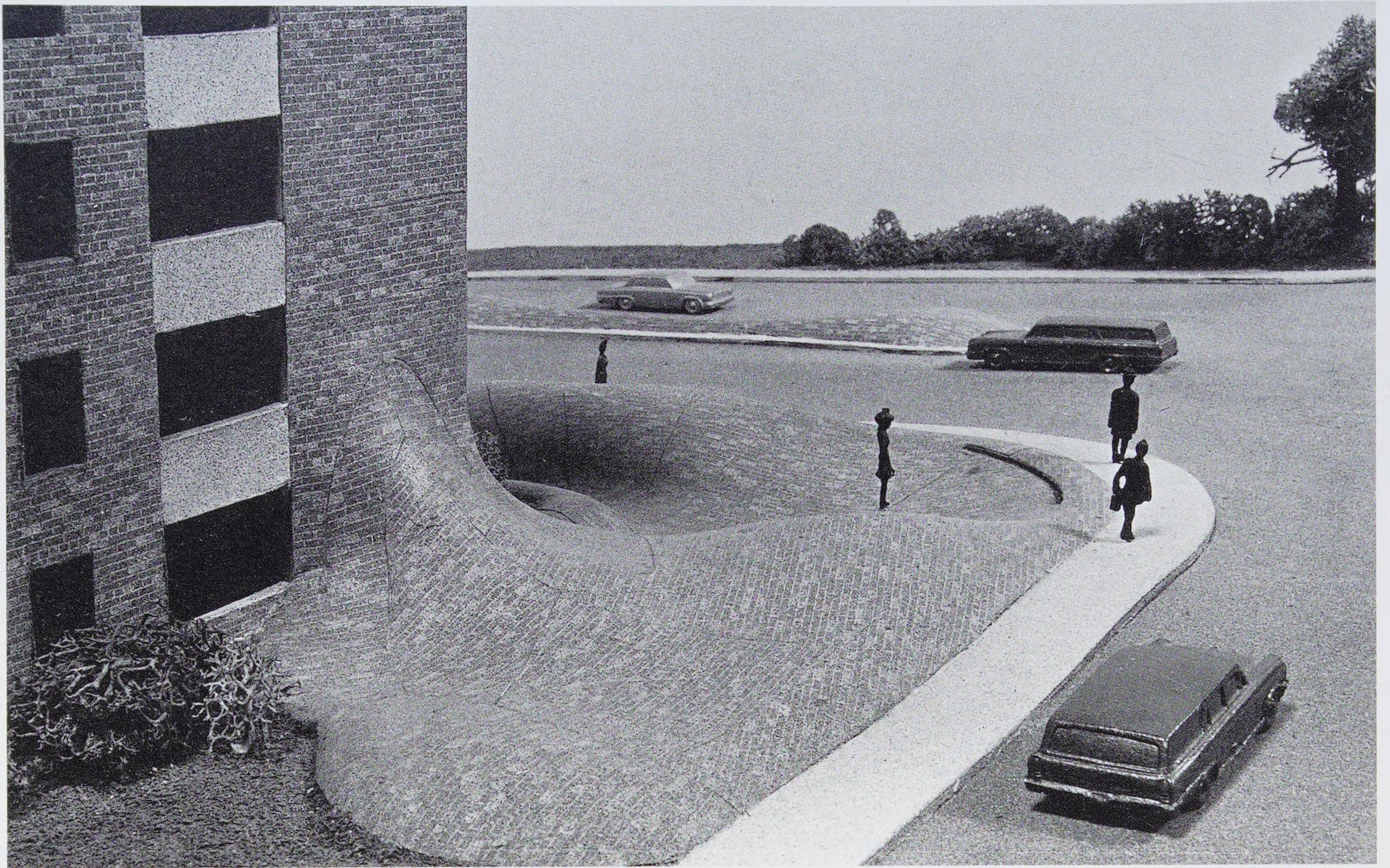


SITE office at 60 Greene Street, New York City, 1973

younger generation of architects to the lingering tyranny of formalism.

During the late 1950s and early 1960s I had worked off and on in Rome as a sculptor. The intrinsic blending of art, architecture, communicative iconography, and public space in Italy left a profound impression. Alison also experienced the impact of Italy during an extended tour in 1970. This influence became the basis of radical changes in our work from 1970 to 1980 and shaped the philosophical foundations of SITE. Whereas the legacy of Industrial Age design defined architecture as a functionalist extension of abstract art, and painting and sculpture as mere accessories to buildings, the Italian concept encompassed an entirely different set of priorities. From the 12th to the 16th century, the proper “function” of architecture was the integration of the arts in the service of communication. The building’s role as shelter was seen as a response to necessity, not as a compendium of services, social reforms, and real estate objectives to be translated into abstract geometry.

We saw the lessons of Italy as fundamental to any fusion of the arts. For a meaningful alliance between artists and architects to occur, there must be a compelling reason that goes beyond the mere decision to collaborate (a resolution that, alone, usually produces only uncomfortable confrontations). The higher purpose must be based on a unified concept, as in the production of a play or a film, which unquestionably requires a team of disciplines for its realization. The classic example of this form of collaboration is the 12th-century Gothic church, where an entire village of builders, artisans, clergy, and civic leaders contributed their talents in a celebration of faith. It was this unified objective that validated the collaboration, produced the meaningful iconography, and sustained every participant’s cooperation and belief in the project. In seeking a modern-day equivalent of this pinnacle of achievement, SITE was faced with trying to create a public statement in a context characterized by



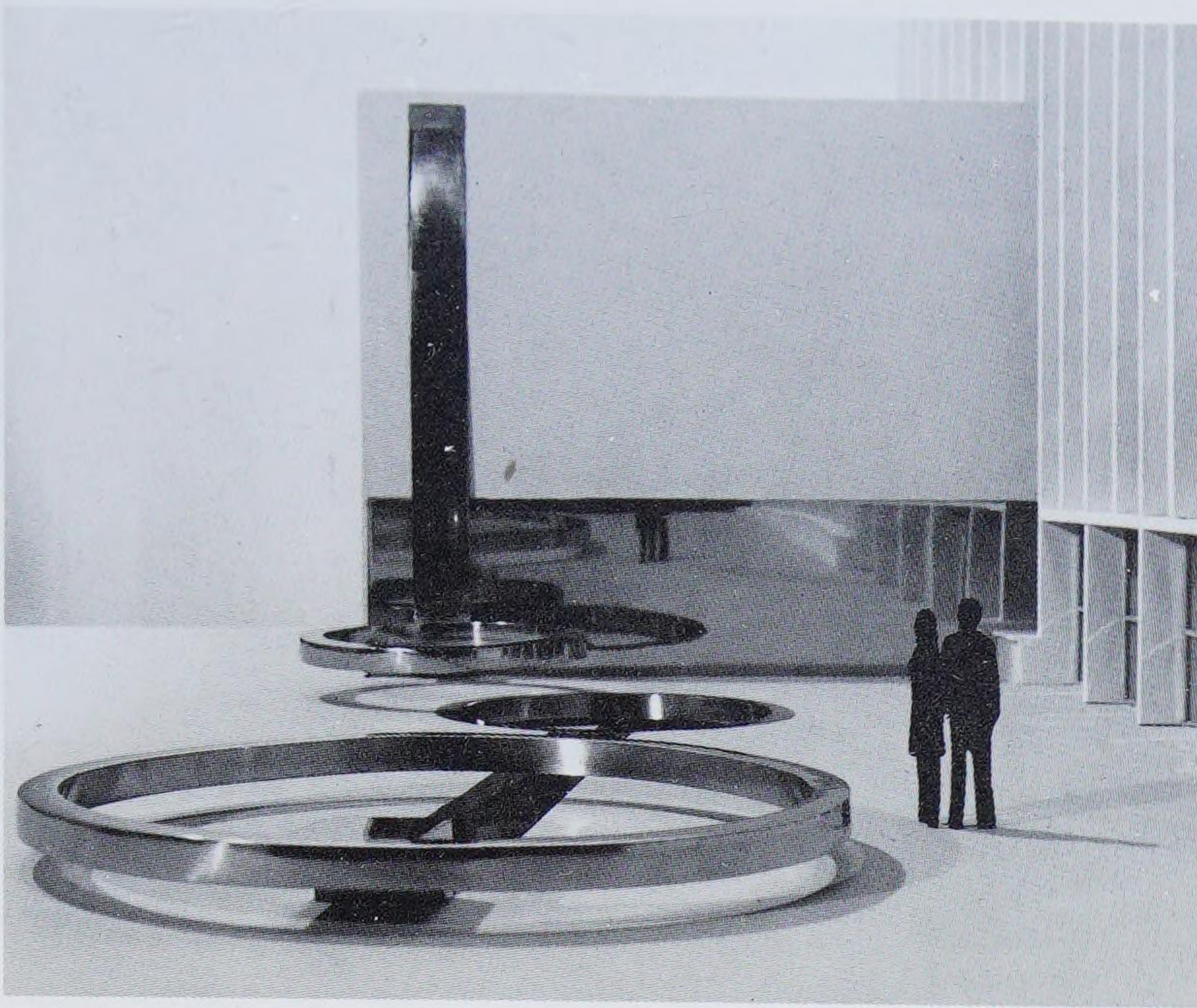
*Model showing detail of Peekskill Melt, Peekskill, New York,
1971*

pluralism, a lack of consensus imagery, an absence of symbols, a breakdown in community spirit, the isolation of the arts from each other, and general chaos and disorder. There was very little to declare in the public domain that an integration of the arts could even justify, much less celebrate.

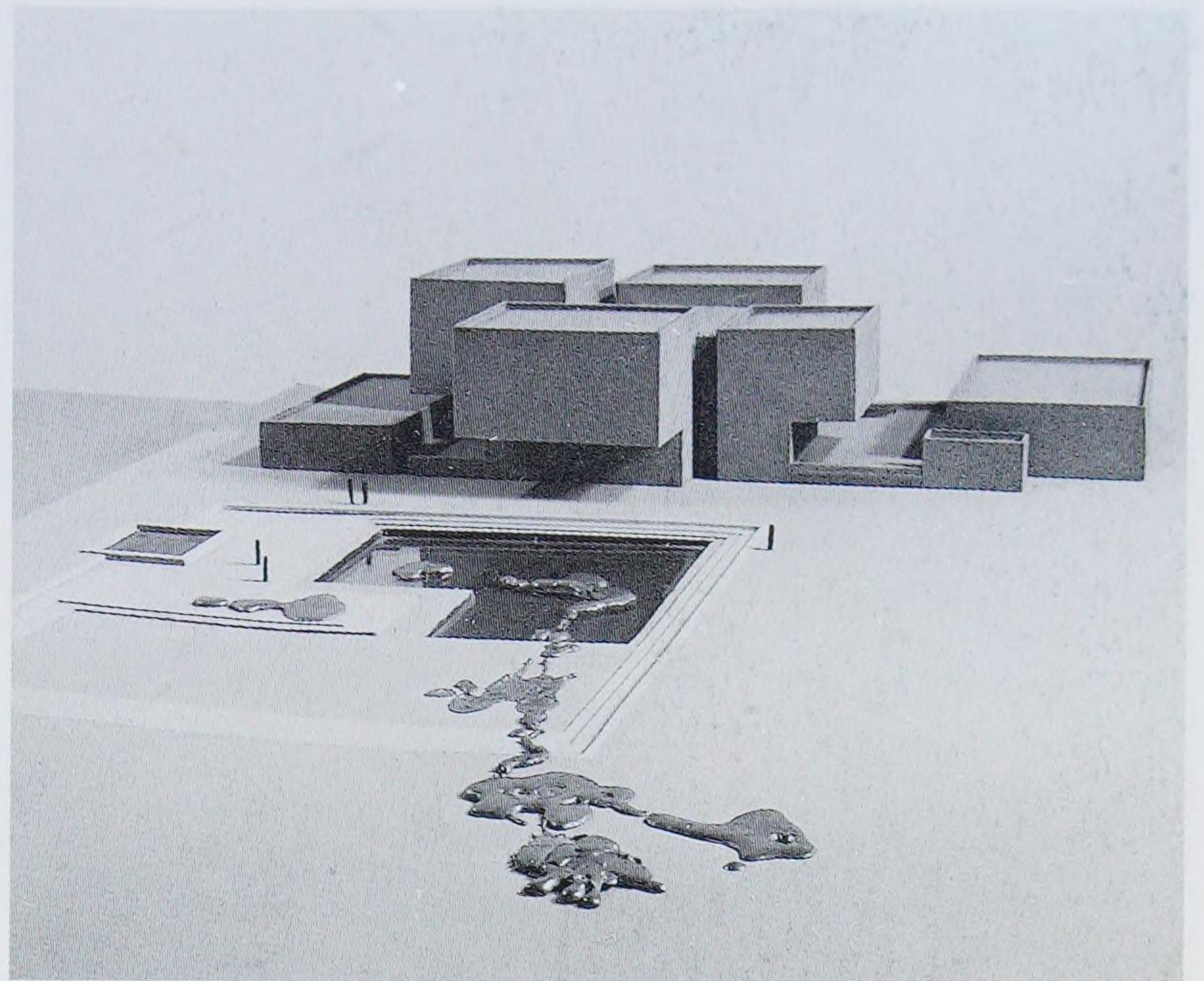
From our earliest origins, the members of SITE knew that if any relevant fusion of the arts was to evolve, there could be no return to the past, no nostalgic and artificial re-creation of historic iconography (as proposed by much late post-modernist architecture), and no option but to search for sources of content in the present. The complexities of this revelation were understood and our challenge was defined, but the possibility of getting anything built to test our convictions was minimal. Virtually all opportunities for public art commissions at the time were shaped by community, curatorial, and client misconceptions about the relationship between art and architecture and, more critically, a total confusion over the meaning of the word "public" in today's world. Invariably, those choosing or commissioning the art were operating within a frame of reference derived from private art shown in the gallery or museum. If a project was called "environmental," this meant that the "art" was defined as a specific territory, simply a space afforded a large object that might be traversed or circumnavigated by the pedestrian.

SITE's first commissions and the accompanying ideas were a reflection of these restraints and the struggle to reconcile our intentions with limited options. An unbuilt project for an environmental sculpture in the South Wall Plaza of New York's Lincoln Center proposed a mirrored stainless-steel wall to reflect people's activity as they walked around massive incisions in the paving. Another proposal for I. M. Pei's Everson Museum in Syracuse, New York, suggested a distribution piece in cast metal that would function like a random landscape, rising out of the reflection pool in the plaza and spilling over the surrounding concrete. Other early concepts included a paving configuration in the shape of an expanding universe for the University of Wisconsin's Astronomy Building, a midtown docklike structure in massive wood beams for the main street of Binghamton, New York, and an undulating, chessboardlike plaza for the University of Northern Iowa that respected the site's topographical character and included movable components to accommodate the changing seasons. In each case there was an attempt to relate sculptural elements to the existing architecture; and insofar as the solutions responded to regional topography, thematic programs, and the formal aspects of architecture, they went beyond the usual scope of public art and space design during that period.

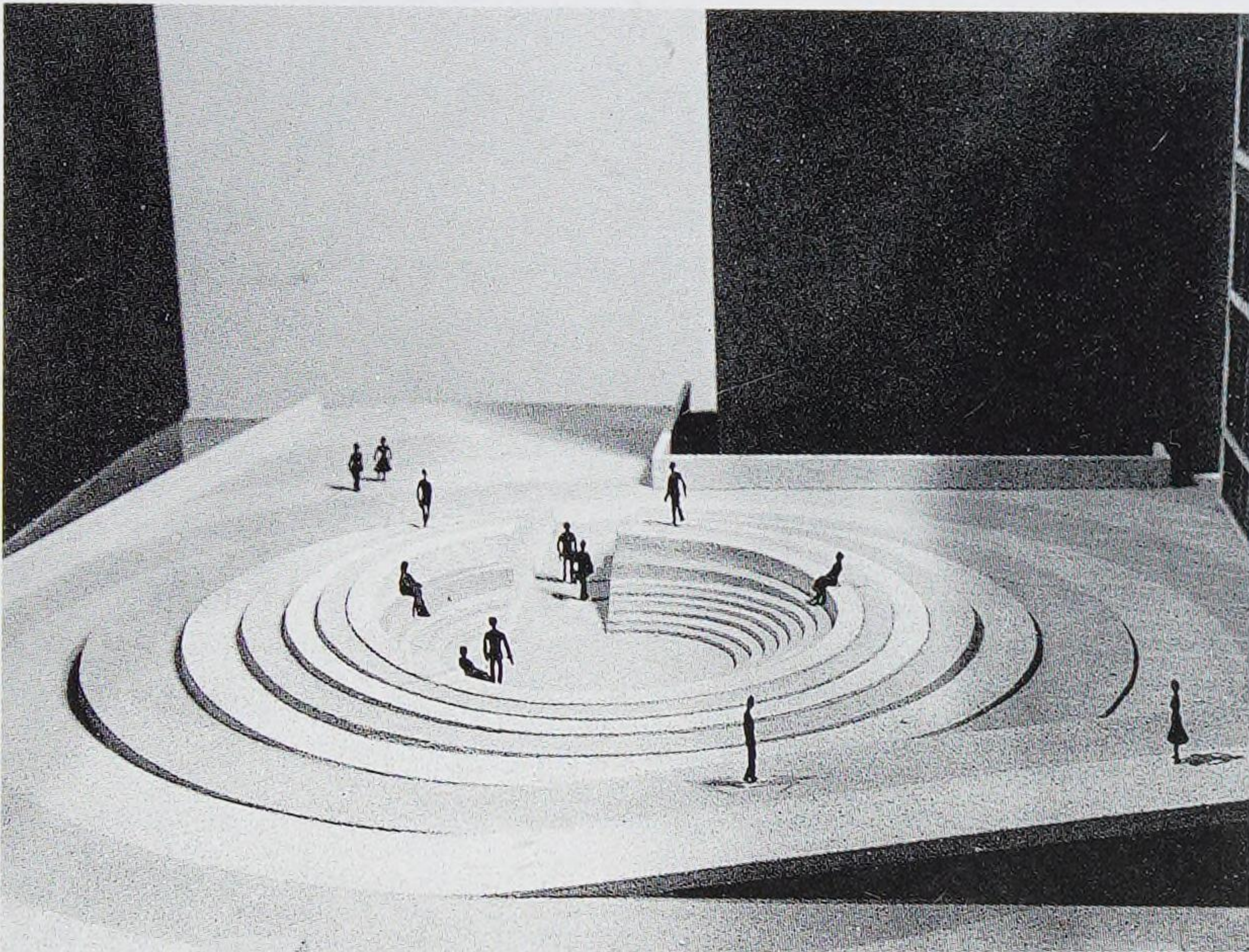
Still, certain frustrations remained for SITE. We contin-



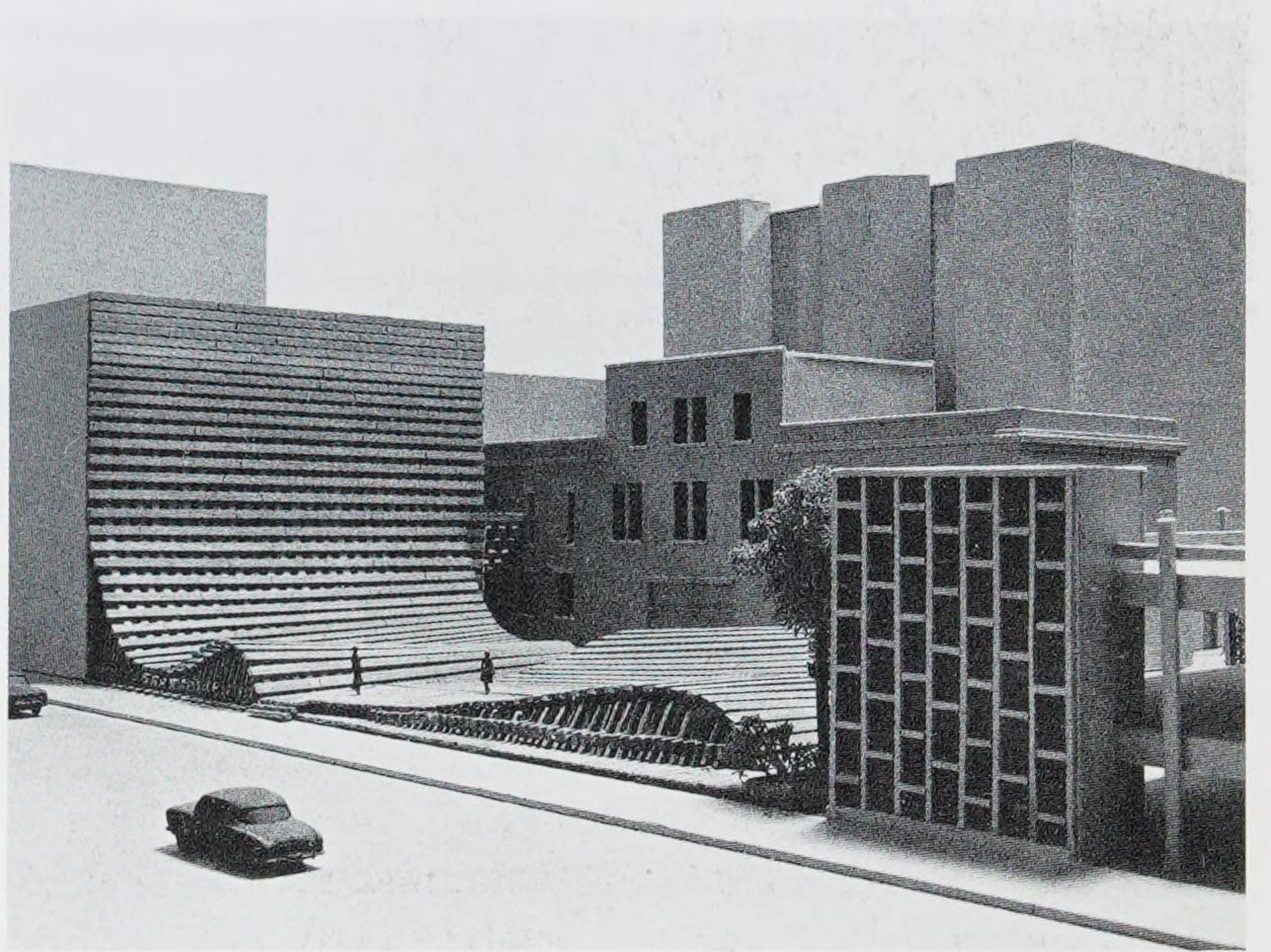
Model of south-wall plaza sculpture for Lincoln Center, New York City, 1969



Model of plaza sculpture for Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York, 1969



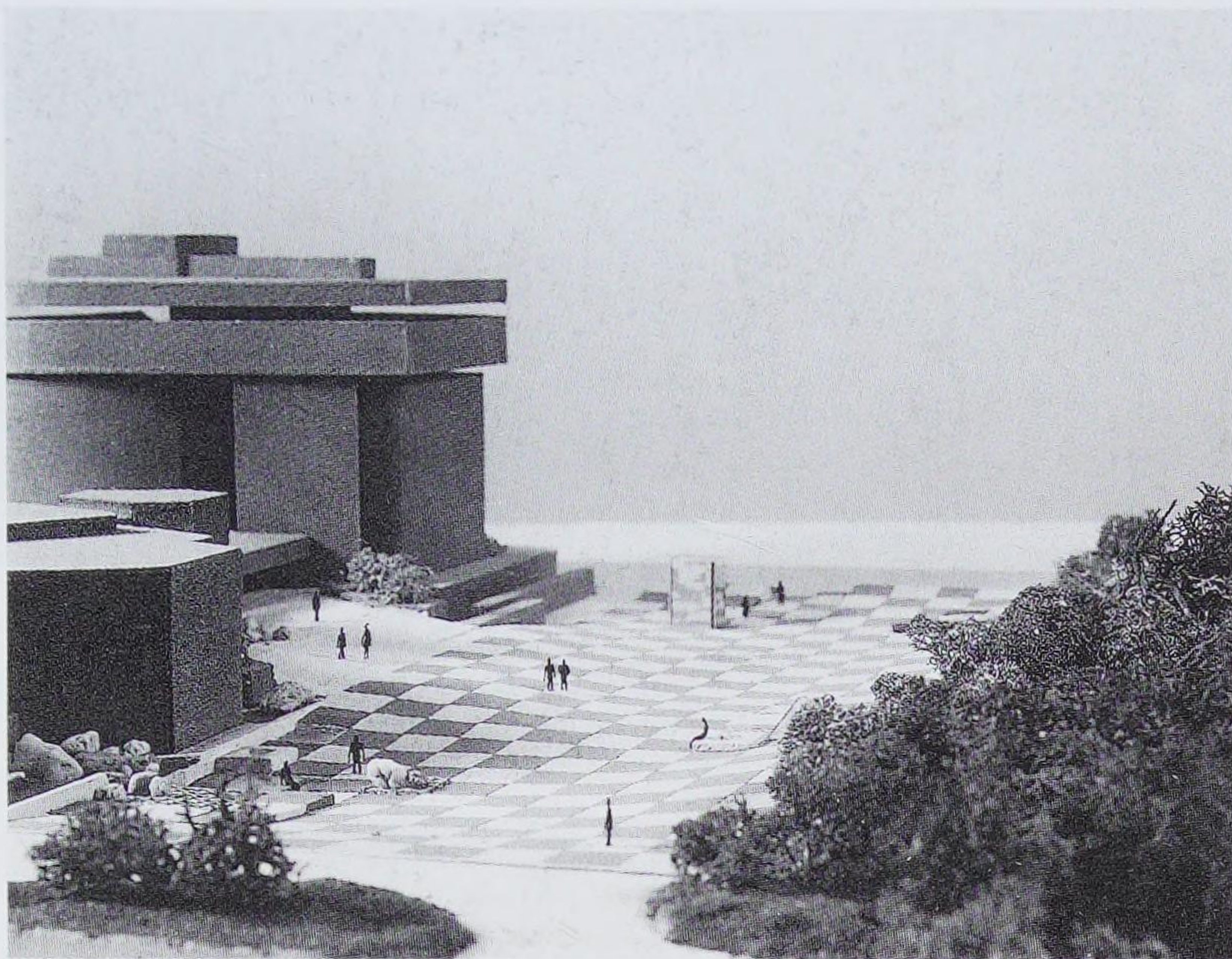
Model of Physics-Astronomy Plaza for University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, 1971



Model of Binghamton Dock, Binghamton, New York, 1972

ued to feel that formalistic concerns in our work outweighed the more conceptual and psychological objectives. As a result, we also felt trapped by the modernist traditions that continued to be preserved because of general cultural inclinations and the conservatism of the architecture world. At the same time, in my work I needed a release from the Constructivist origins of my early sculpture, from the aesthetic baggage associated with form making, shape making, and space making for their own sake. This restlessness led SITE toward a more contemporary approach to the unified vision we so admired in the Italian Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque periods. The problem that persisted was how to identify an appropriate iconography for a society with no universal symbols.

One possibility, we concluded, could be found in Jung's concept of a collective unconscious, where the symbols generated were mutable and evolutionary, where the imagery evolved from personal or psychological sources, rather than cultural or religious sources. Thus, in creating work for today's public environment, new meanings had to be derived from our perceptions of people's responses to certain social and psychological signals. These elusive sources of symbolism, what Jung called "trigger mechanisms" for the unconscious mind, are difficult enough to identify, much less to convert to an architectural statement. They exist in the realm of pure instinct and are generally more suitable for translation into literature or drama, since language is the most appropriate way to convey psychological information. A



Model of Education Place for University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa, 1970



View of a typical Best Products Showroom "box", 1970

playwright, for example, can readily deal with such current issues as human reaction to a nuclear destiny or people's alienation in a society of deteriorating values. But the intractable materials of architecture—masonry, glass, steel, concrete—seem inherently too physical and nonassociative to serve as monitors of the collective unconscious.

While we wrestled with these conflicting ideas and objectives during our formative years, our faith in the concept of a total fusion of art and architecture and their ability to convey a new form of symbolism was reinforced by the legacy of so many exemplary structures from the past. We observed that only in the past fifty years had architecture been defined primarily as design and thereby reduced to formal abstraction.

Our first opportunities to test these beliefs, from 1972 to 1975, came through commissions from two sources: Sydney and Frances Lewis, president and vice-president of the Best Products Company of Richmond, Virginia, and David Bermant, president of National Shopping Centers, based in Rye, New York. All of these individuals were exceptional patrons of the arts. The Lewis collection included contemporary painting and sculpture and an extensive representation of Art Nouveau and Art Deco furniture. The Bermant collection focused on public art for the company's retail environments, with a particular emphasis on work that expressed or utilized recent technology.

SITE's early projects were for American shopping centers, a building type usually disdained by artists and architects. From our viewpoint, however, there was a distinct parallel between the conventional commercial strip and the classic marketplaces of Italy. In both settings, commerce served as a magnet for people, providing the best possible reason for the presence of public art and communicative architecture. But whereas the European precedents relied on the centrifugal attraction of ornate facades and plazas to appeal to

the community, the American highway strip offered little opportunity for intimate spaces or universal iconography. SITE's challenge was to find a relevant solution for the new marketplace that took into account its lack of focal attraction when viewed from a speeding car.

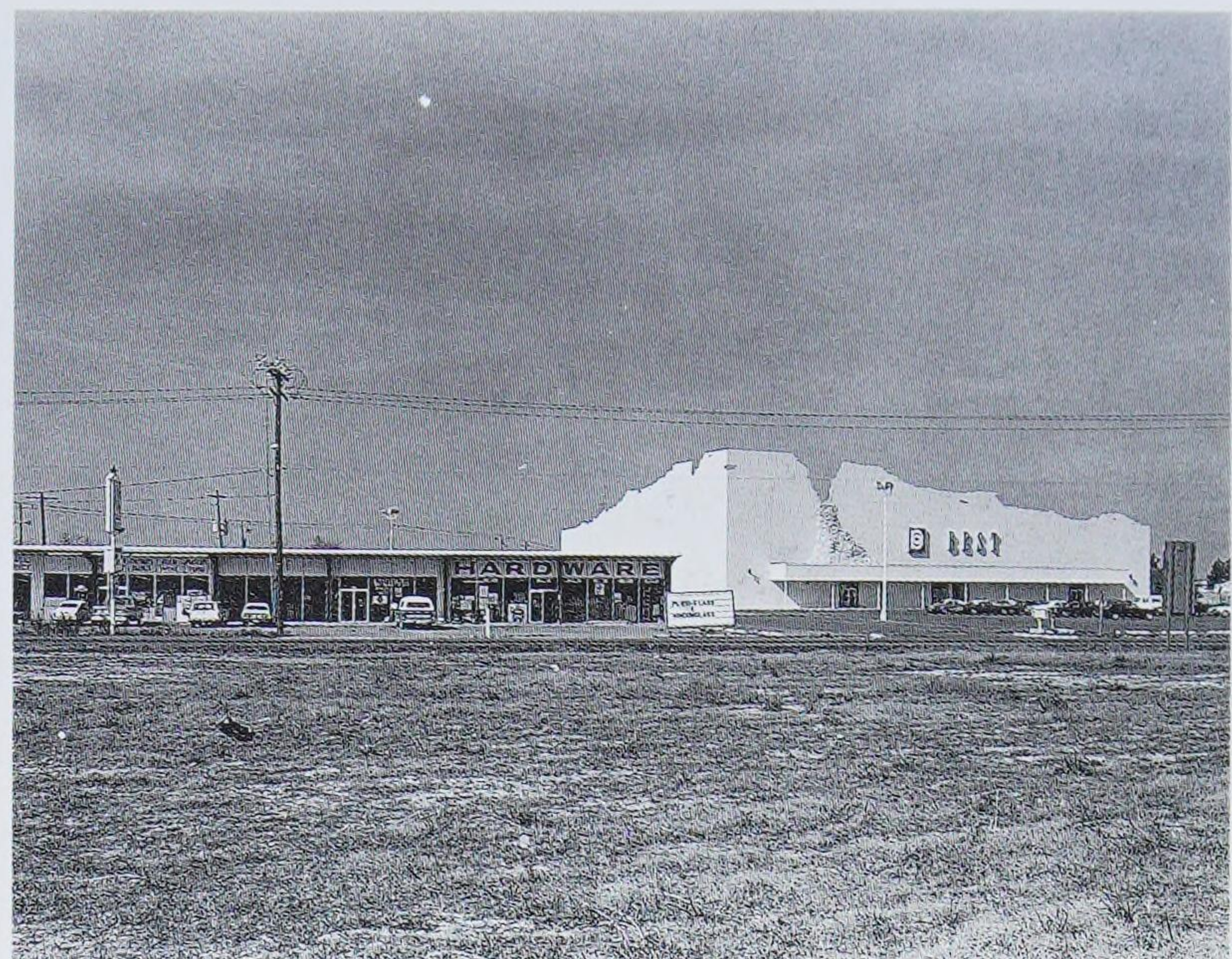
Our approach to the first Best Products showrooms was to generate highway images that would trigger motorists' responses to strip architecture. These initial concerns—architecture as a reflection of social and psychological issues, as a source of information and commentary, as an expression of reactions to context and the physicality of context itself, and as a fusion of art and building—also became the foundation of SITE's later work.

The courageous patronage of Sydney and Frances Lewis was both the financial support and the inspirational force behind SITE's early projects. It was their policy to ask the crucial questions concerning intent and budget in the beginning and then transfer all authority for aesthetic and implementation decisions to the artist. Given the inclination of most architectural clients toward an undervaluation of art and a paranoia about economics, the Lewises' faith in SITE, even before we had built anything, was unique.

At the time of SITE's initial involvement with Best Products, the corporation had about twenty-five branches of their catalogue merchandising chain, most of them located in Virginia. These stores, which discount such goods as household appliances, furniture, and jewelry, were typically housed in rectangular warehouses divided on the interior between retail and storage. Whatever architecture did exist was clearly of the most elementary and banal variety. Although these "merchandising boxes" were built entirely for function, they still possessed strong archetypal features for most Americans driving along the highways. As sources of reflex identification, they also embodied inherent meanings beyond their pragmatic intentions. The ubiquitous masonry



Best Peeling Project, Richmond, Virginia, 1972



Best Indeterminate Facade Showroom, Houston, Texas, 1975

containers could become culturally charged icons with only the slightest physical interventions or shifts of context.

In the case of SITE's first project for Best—the Peeling Project in Richmond, Virginia—an existing showroom was renovated by including a facade of brickwork that curled off into space on two corners. The second structure, the Indeterminate Facade building in Houston, Texas, was built as a new edifice but was still based on the supermarket box archetype. The facade and the side walls were extended beyond the logical edge of the roofline and fragmented to create the impression of a building arrested somewhere between construction and demolition. To heighten the feeling of ambiguity—and to provide a new definition for the integration of art and architecture—a section of the facade was punched out, allowing a cascade of bricks to tumble over the pedestrian canopy. In addition to symbolizing for many people the precarious future of consumer culture, the brick pile and the ragged walls represented the use of sculpture as an extension of, or commentary on, architecture. In contrast to the usual inclusion of art as a crafted artifact attached or adjacent to architecture, the Indeterminate Facade proposed that sculpture might regain its former iconographic potency by inverting its own architectural context. In place of some superfluous appendage to the showroom, here was an example of intrinsic art where meaning and content derived from the response of the public to such issues as the relationship between art and architecture, the significance of the shopping center in America, and the notion of finished and unfinished.

Working with ideas similar to those explored by the Indeterminate Facade, SITE completed its first environmental art project, the Ghost Parking Lot, for developer David Bermant in 1977. The client's desire was to use a seldom-occupied section of his shopping center parking facility in Hamden, Connecticut, to best advantage. His original vision

had included some kind of kinetic sculpture or electronic artwork to signal the attention of motorists passing on the adjacent boulevard. Because of SITE's interest in the information provided by context itself, we decided to take advantage of both the materials and the artifacts already present in the area. These included rows of immobile cars sitting on an asphalt surface. The solution was to bury twenty parked automobiles under a skin of asphalt, totally fusing them with the surrounding pavement. Although not an architectural work, the Ghost Parking Lot launched SITE's continuing commitment to the integration of art and information in public spaces. Both the Houston and the Hamden projects dealt with the psychology of situation, whereas the traditional concept of modern design had always measured aesthetic excellence by the invention shown in abstract volumes, contours, and the partitioning of spaces.

In these pre-1978 projects, SITE's contribution was to focus on the importance of psychological connections in exploring a new public language. During the last decade, much architecture has been concerned with a search for relevant imagery, but most of the resolutions have been drawn from history, either ancient (postmodernism's appropriation of classical elements) or recent (neo-modernism and so-called Deconstructivism with its exaggerated interpretations of early 20th-century Constructivism). Within each current movement and style the intent has been to establish a communicative iconography for the public domain. One continuing obstruction to this objective has been architecture's slavish reliance on the formalist devices identified with the modern movement from 1910 to 1930 (including its inspirational roots in the emerging industrial era) and a failure to embrace the post-technological, information-oriented present. In responding to this dilemma, SITE has developed a philosophy that recognizes the power of the collective unconscious, its communication through current



Detail of Ghost Parking Lot, Hamden, Connecticut, 1978

media, and its capacity to produce a universal symbolism for the building arts. Although a number of our projects of the late 1980s have dealt with extremely complex architectural and public-space programs, and equally complex solutions, we continue to feel that our very simple and iconic ideas of the 1970s set the stage for all subsequent work. We still try to identify the archetypal situation in architecture, the cityscape, and nature—or that set of circumstances that

seems to reside within our deepest instincts—as a potential source of symbolism. The process of drawing new meanings out of these archetypes by using modest interventions still seems to be a far more compelling challenge than simply adding to the century's now tiresome catalogue of formal inventions. For SITE, this has always been the difference between architecture as art and architecture as design.

I N T E R V I E W

INTERVIEW WITH SITE

by Herbert Muschamp

Herbert Muschamp: I want to start by taking issue with a statement I found in an introduction to an earlier book on your work. "There is something about the works of SITE that one finds difficult to understand at first . . . whatever it is deceives the eye and confuses. However, confusion is not generated by anything as involved as dissimulation or ambiguity. The intent to confuse is obvious. The works make fun of ideas and values that an observer brings with him."¹

The writer has established, first, that this stuff is very difficult to understand and, second, that it's all about deception and confusion and that this is intentional on your part. That seems to me a rather common misunderstanding of what your work is about. Could you address the whole subject of "confusion"—what you see there, what you intend to be there, what the perceiver actually brings to or finds in a project?

James Wines: There is no intention to confuse. To the contrary, as with any work of art, there is the intention to communicate. However, an artist often communicates ambiguous ideas, and this is what makes art interesting. Take a film like *Rear Window*, for example. Everything in the whole movie is very iconic, very simple. The audience has a reflex response to generic windows overlooking a typical Greenwich Village backyard. The cast of characters is composed of ordinary people who conform to recognizable role models. All of the archetypes of the movie are clear-cut and easy to identify. But as you begin to get into the unfolding drama, if you understand how Hitchcock worked, you realize that what he was saying was that the eye is the equivalent of the window, the proscenium, and it records the presence of light. If you understand that his film isn't just about a plot, or just about a man looking across an alleyway and seeing a murder, if you can take it to its larger dimension, for which any artist working in any medium deserves to be credited, then you understand that Hitchcock was a genuine filmmaker using archetypal images to create a mystery and new perceptions of cinema.

SITE's work is generally misunderstood by mainstream architects. It is taken too literally. I don't think a dia-

logue exists in architecture that's prepared to take design outside of the traditional parameters of formalism and historicism. In critiques of movies, it would be as if Hitchcock's films were evaluated only for their plot development, or only for conventional cinema techniques. The foreword in the book you mentioned is based on that kind of limitation. It's based on a very narrow understanding of conceptual intent—not only in our work, but in any kind of artistic effort. Not to see that SITE is using these simple images for reasons of inversion is to miss the point. The so-called confusion is just that: missing the point. Using architecture for its archetypal value is what SITE is really about. It is finding new areas of perception for a very traditional art form. The really shocking thing about our buildings is that we use images that communicate so directly.

HM: Yes, the thing that struck me the most when I read that statement is that it seemed so much more applicable to conventional architecture. Where is the meaning supposed to reside in conventional architecture? One thought that conventional architects were so proud to have drained all content, all meaning away.

Alison Sky: Our working process is one of building up layers and weaving together strands of information, resulting in a readability on multiple levels. The work communicates to people in this way, becoming a different experience, telling a different story to whomever is reading it. For example, our client Laurie Mallet has said that she is amazed that everybody who enters her house responds to it—everyone from a delivery person to the garbage man to her circle of friends, who are artists and intellectuals. This is characteristic of all of our projects. They are about communication, and the way in which they engage you has a lot to do with what you bring to them. The statement you read is probably coming from a rigidity in terms of accepting the definition of what the language of architecture should be, rather than from a lack of thought.

HM: That is lack of thought, as well as a real fear people have to admitting what's actually in their minds.

JW: It's based on conventions and references that restrict looking outside of those references.

AS: And it's that fear that makes people reject as "architecture" anything that forces them to look outside a limited set of references.

JW: Architects won't call something architecture unless it meets certain rigid qualifications. I summed it up in a passage from my recent book *De-Architecture*. It reads: "Designers often dismiss the slightest deviation from the conventional shuffling of geometry because 'it's not *real* architecture' This profound mental block in the architectural profession stems from a reflex mechanism that causes insecure designers to reject any information that doesn't fit comfortably into their rhetorical profile of architecture. It conveniently justifies a state of imperious complacency and precludes dealing with the issue of new and expanded definitions. The zone of the "real" in architecture—especially as understood by Modernism—is a specious territory indeed if one judges from the past thirty years of construction in America. Bearing this dismal testimony in mind, defining real architecture as the Modernist-derived model becomes more a paranoid act of faith than a reasonable preservation of standards." In essence, that's what most of the profession does—gets locked into time-worn and irrelevant definitions.

HM: Can you account for the fear that is still operating in this particular institution (Parsons School of Design) now that architects are increasingly given to seeing themselves as "artists"?

JW: It's very hard to put your finger on. I tried throughout my book to understand that fear, and I concluded that it has a tremendous amount to do with the aesthetic reversal that a student encounters after leaving architecture school. There are a lot of fantasy projects assigned in design studio, like a utopian house on the crest of the Alps, so everything is very ideological. But even ideology is tempered by the fact that the student is going to be aesthetically compromised upon graduation and will have to deal with a dreary, practical world. The message is that you had better experience all the fantasy in school because when you get out you have to get a job, you have to work for a dull office where the parameters of creativity will be defined. In the anxiety to build, aesthetic sacrifice is pervasive.

HM: You're talking about a generation of architects, many of whom, as Michael Graves has admitted quite candidly about himself, wanted to be "artists" when

they were young. But when their parents put the fear of God in them, saying that that was a totally irresponsible thing for a middle-class child to want to do, they went into architecture. That way they could sort of be artists, but it would be safe.

I want to bring up the subject of your background because you obviously decided at a certain point that you were going to be an artist when you grew up. Somebody (who shall remain nameless) who was trying to impress me once said, "Well, I've known James so long, I've known him since the days when he was a bad sculptor."

AS: James did have an entire career as a sculptor, and there are a lot of people who wish he would go back to it. He had also worked with architects and on public commissions. We were both interdisciplinary.

JW: Alison and I have very hybrid sensibilities; that's the aspect of our work that's the least understood. Both of us have been deeply involved in visual art for our whole lives. We always knew that we were going to find some form of visual expression, but neither of us was sure what form this expression would take. We were always on the borderline of drama, filmmaking, set design, painting, drawing, and sculpture. And I don't know why this is so misunderstood, since there are so many hybrid artists in this century who have dealt with crosscurrents of information and who have mixed disciplines. Among architects there still prevails a kind of compliant respect for architecture with a capital A.

AS: There was never any question in my mind that all of this interdisciplinary activity I was involved with would one day fuse into a unified expression in my life.

HM: When you were doing sculpture in the sixties, did you consider yourself a sculptor? Would it have made you unhappy to have been written up by Lucy Lippard or whomever, along with other sculptors at the time? Did you consider yourself to be another kind of animal?

JW: No, I would say that my sculpture activity was conventional and in the constructivist traditions of this century. I was more cautious as an artist than I am now. I would not push limits; I was more or less a mainstream, formal sculptor.

AS: There was always the impetus to connect with a public dimension, but there wasn't the understanding

of how to make those connections. I did not have a reputation to the degree that James had. I had been involved with theater, music, dance, poetry, and sculpture at various periods in my life. But for myself, and somewhat for James, there was a need for the work to go in a more public direction. You're involved with the issues you're working with, but you don't know how to take the next step. At a certain point the next step became working in the public domain and developing a language that would communicate in that context. The evolution into architecture came because architecture is naturally *there*—it surrounds us, its presence is not artificial—whereas the placement of sculpture in the public domain at a certain point becomes an artificial imposition. It can work, but it's not as intrinsic.

HM: You were a sculptor in the heyday of formalist aesthetics. How conscious were you of that as a dogma, and were you moved then to resist it?

JW: I would say that sculpture never gave me the satisfaction of something more environmental. When I started really working with information, I began to feel free to include anything from anywhere. I deeply admired Picasso for the way he was able to use information so spontaneously. I didn't dare do that as a sculptor. I was cautious and restrained and I did more formal work. I would occasionally do perverse things with ideas and materials, with surreal connections, but I was straining for something more. Sculpture, as an object, was confining me; it wasn't liberating enough. I was following some guidelines and conventions that I ultimately recognized were over the hill. Modernist, formalist, abstractionist traditions seemed like picking over skeletal remains.

HM: The sense I have is that you were really training yourself in the act of making, that that was the real importance of the sculpture, especially for your later work.

JW: I definitely conquered the hands-on construction process. But bear in mind, it wasn't anything like my present work.

Now I am involved primarily with ideas, references, layering, and different sources of content. I really never think about the practice of art anymore; I never say to myself, "I'm going to the studio now and I will make buildings or sculptures." It almost doesn't matter. I don't feel those restraints of the past, that I have to go to the studio and make something.

HM: It may matter to the observer; to me there is a clear difference between work that gets made and work that doesn't.

JW: Oh, I like the fact that art exists physically, that there is some tangible evidence of consolidated thought, so that the final work isn't just a model of a thought.

AS: But we are intrigued with the way things are made. We don't turn that into the issue, necessarily. Our work is generally about other kinds of information, but our understanding of how things are made is part of the reason we are able to translate ideas from drawings into reality and retain their spirit; they don't die in that process. Our work also tends to be more labor intensive. The issue is not one of exotic materials (they are generally commonplace) but of skills. We are always dragging someone out of retirement. The pride that the people we work with have once they get involved is amazing, and it's because their creative participation is engaged, as in the historic tradition of artist and artisan. So for us, how things are made is very important.

Collage is also an essential aspect of our work, but it can't be achieved in a set of drawings; you've got to work with a team of people and materials in a very direct and spontaneous way.

HM: That seems to be so in all of your work.

AS: Exactly.

HM: It seems explainable to me by the fact that you did not go through the conventional educational system of architects, where the notion of postponement is built in as a result of the guild system and its assumptions, such as the assumption that you're not going to build until you're terribly old. You never had those assumptions drilled into your heads.

JW: We really went about everything in a naive way, meaning we had an attitude where if you said you could do it, you could do it—you could will it into reality. I don't think we ever stopped to think about what we didn't know.

AS: Maybe we should have. Looking back now, maybe we should have restrained ourselves. We sort of just plunged in. We had ideas, we saw work that needed to be done, we saw a gap in information.

HM: Just a gap?

AS: A chasm! We just jumped right in as artists. That was our instinct, to jump in and then recognize what we had jumped into. You take a look around you and you start to understand why things are the way they are. And then you claw your way out of the abyss.

HM: When you made this jump, did you have any personal contacts in the architecture world—guides, friends, people you looked up to, dead or alive, but particularly alive?

JW: We were conceptually attracted to Venturi at that time. He was certainly someone who gave us courage because he had broken a lot of the rules himself and had established certain issues that we thought were urgent for the period.

AS: But are you asking whether we tried to establish connections and get advice from people?

HM: Or did you happen to learn just from being around others who were more or less using an architectural language?

AS: Not really.

JW: The people we were interested in were mostly paper architects or visual artists. People we admired and saw with some frequency were Alice Aycock and Gordon Matta-Clark.

AS: Yes, and Robert Smithson, Ant Farm, Superstudio, Haus Rucker, UFO, etc.

JW: We were drawn to other hybrid people who were around at that time, people who were doing things that were a cross between art, architecture, and sculpture. Europeans were drawn to our work from the outset; there was never any hostility from the European architecture scene. We got off to a roaring start from the standpoint of press attention, and we thought we would be catapulted right along until we got the chance to build things and hit the “serious” architecture world.

HM: Did the opposition you encountered when you hit that world surprise you?

JW: Because of our promising beginning and because we had this kind of international dialogue going, we somehow thought quick success was assured. Our first warning signals were that certain establishment architects really got uptight about SITE’s early projects.

AS: We had a few projects that we lost because of the architects, because we were not in a position of control. There were some very early commissions that did not go forward, and we attribute this to the architects involved. At that point we made the decision that we had to form a professional firm to realize our concepts. As long as we remained dependent upon architects to do this, our projects just wouldn’t get built. The minute you crossed the threshold of that separate “thing” in the courtyard, the minute it became somehow attached to the building, either in the form of a commentary or an actual physical attachment, it was all over.

HM: What do you mean?

JW: Because our work was a commentary on architecture, the profession seemed to sense perverse activity from the moment we actually began to build.

AS: As long as the work could be put in the category of something that did not engage the architecture in a dialogue, or create any kind of commentary on the architecture, or physically touch the architecture in any way, there was perhaps a chance. But the minute it crossed that threshold it was just out of the question.

JW: It was all over early on. We were dealing with ideas totally lost in 20th-century architecture. The problem also had a lot to do with the whole modernist revolution and its rejection of decoration and popular iconography. For thousands of years, architecture—the very presence of a building or a structure in the public domain—carried very strong narrative messages. Sometimes these messages were so iconic that they defined the political and religious life of a society, and sometimes they were more passive, functioning more as a background. Nevertheless, historically, interiors and public spaces carried the principles of society forward by means of universal iconography.

HM: That’s Charles Jencks’s message.

JW: The funny thing about it is that he’s right, and I acknowledge him at the beginning of my book on “de-architecture.” Both Venturi and Jencks are right about popular imagery and the use of architecture as information. The point they miss is that the archetypes and images those traditions depended upon were so much a part of those societies that no one had to fabricate them self-consciously. Today, to tack a Greek pediment onto a building and then to start playing around with its proportions to show invention simply destroys its original iconic meaning. The architect has to ques-

tion how much meaning a modified classical motif really has in the world we live in.

The thesis of my book is based on the Jungian notion that true iconic meaning comes from a collective unconscious, from undefinable sensations that we share collectively. The artist discovers relevant imagery in the ambient sensibility of the society; it is an unconsciously recognized presence that makes connections to other people's minds. A Gothic sculptor, for example, knew when he carved a Madonna that was also a column that all of the necessary references for the man in the street would fall together in perfect alignment.

HM: I have to stop you because certainly a Jungian would say that those images were from the collective unconscious, and that is why they were powerful.

JW: Yes they were, but they were part of a consensus of symbolism, and not ambiguous signals like today's.

HM: That's the problem a lot of people have with Jung: You can use his ideas to justify a great deal of very oppressive object-making or language use. If a Madonna is in my unconsciousness, I certainly want it out of there this minute; I certainly don't want a Madonna on my street.

JW: I think that is the difference between Christian imagery and the ambiguous, mutable, and evolutionary symbolism that has replaced explicit and implicit iconography. After all, it was Hitler who tried to make artificial iconography for a totalitarian cause, and failed.

HM: Or succeeded all too well, and demonstrated the kind of political hierarchy necessary for that kind of success. Before you can go on to the reintroduction of various kinds of imagery and ideas and content, you have to acknowledge, to some extent, that the "cleansing program" of formalism was very, very necessary. That was the whole value of William Lethaby's work at the end of the 19th century. He went through all this wonderful old ceremonial architecture and said, "Look, they did all these great things but they are totally unavailable to us today because we believe in the individual; if our architects are going to have iconography, they're going to have to do it without recourse to history."

JW: With the floodtide of academic modernism after the 1940s, one had to take it on faith that cubes, cones, spheres, and planes had meaning because of some kind

of preordained, transcendental connections. As a spectator, one had to make a leap of faith to assume that these abstractions took on very special significance. That's why I think that for his time an architect like Le Corbusier was as narrative as he was abstract. He found in these kinds of forms metaphors for the new technology and the new machine age that was about to sweep the world in 1910. He saw these metaphors very clearly, and that is why they carry conviction and power. Le Corbusier had a metaphorical vision in common with Picasso and Stravinsky, who also sensed the change of the times, the bridge between the old and the new.

HM: Art was the new religion.

JW: Exactly. And in the process, those early modernists created an iconography that left a lot of people out of the game. As Jung observed, "One cannot create a symbol." They created iconography that became *style*, not symbolism, and was appropriated by every design school in the world. At that point the architect could be very smug and imperious. Anyone who didn't understand all the little formalist exercises could be dismissed as a philistine. Architects created a kind of hierarchy of exclusionism based on what they considered a new iconography. But the problem has been that when you put these derivative abstractions out in the street, especially when they are built at inappropriate scales and conceived by inferior talent, they foster the vacuous mess we have today, where most buildings have no meaning whatsoever.

HM: Not only that; they are proud of it.

JW: Architects are proud of it because of an inter-professional pride. What will drive an architect to enthusiasm most people couldn't care less about. You asked me if we were ever influenced by or felt attached to any mainstream architectural movements or ideas, and I would say probably not. I don't think Alison and I ever gave them much thought; we were bored with them from the outset. One of our premises has always been that anything genuine, when done for the first time—the Schröder House, for example—is inherently exciting. But seeing derivative Rietveld for the fifty billionth time does not excite us at all.

AS: Not only for the fifty billionth time, but in watered-down versions.

HM: You have worked up a very Frank Lloyd Wright "truth-against-the-world" mentality. . . .

JW: Why do you say that?

HM: That was his motto. Like Wright, you've made a chasm between yourself and your contemporaries, yet you see yourself in direct line with the great architecture of all history. You believe that your attitude is closer to that which lies behind the kind of architecture we admire most from the past because of your concern for meaning and so forth. And here you are creating what are palpably buildings, although even those who admire these projects a great deal will very often say, "This is not architecture." It comes back to that question.

JW: What do they say it is?

HM: Art.

AS: I'm not interested in these definitions; they don't mean anything to me. What difference does it make? I can't engage in that whole definition thing because it becomes a way of limiting, of restricting ideas.

JW: I assume that calling buildings art is supposed to be a put-down. But my feeling is that as long as people can go in and out the front door, and can find the bathroom, and can still derive an aesthetic experience from the totality, then it is architecture as art because they are one and the same.

HM: It's not a put-down, it's a dismissal, which is not the same thing.

AS: Yes, it is a dismissal, but I can't somehow connect with that whole issue. Maybe it's just that I don't personally care. I care if it works for people. I care if it's built for a certain reason and it functions. If it doesn't perform the function it was created for, that bothers me. Whether someone thinks of it as art or architecture, that doesn't really interest me.

HM: Yes, but James has sort of constructed this lineage for your work, and the antecedents in that lineage are clearly *architecture*. He's not talking about *The Last Supper* or the *Pieta*; he is talking about architects and architecture. I don't think it's fair to say that you don't think about it, because obviously you do think about it: You're putting this work, perfectly reasonably, in the context of architecture.

JW: Absolutely, and for two reasons. Without the element of function, without a satisfactory performance of services in a building, without the presence of use,

I am not content. If I'm not dealing with the element of use as raw material, as an ingredient, as an intrinsic piece of information in the work, then it isn't challenging, there's no game plan, there are no rules. If occupancy is not a major factor, I can't be interested in it. My basic interests are as an architect, and I would say that in that sense, I'm truly interested in architecture with a big A.

The second reason is that the very fact that designers say it *isn't* architecture shows we are having an effect on architecture; the denial, the dismissal itself, indicates that something more than a lack of conformity is making them nervous. If SITE's work were just blandly accepted as part of the mainstream of architecture, it would not be having any effect, it wouldn't carry its most important message: critical commentary. So, I would say that the controversy over real versus bogus is an enlivening virtue in SITE's work. But for certain formalist camps there has to be a mechanism to get rid of what may be perceived as ideologically threatening. The die-hard formalists have got to find a way to put this sort of thing into low profile. They've got to get it out of the mainstream of thought; otherwise, they might have to start thinking about it.

AS: There are two things going on. Some people are genuinely made nervous by our work, so they'd rather dismiss it than address it. But within the profession there is also a kind of protective response. Everyone is so concerned with protecting his or her own territory—commissions, reputations, or whatever—that there is a kind of knee-jerk response to try to get rid of the competition.

JW: Architects can always use the disclaimer, "If I can dismiss it, I will never have to think about it."

AS: There are some people who are genuinely nervous, who want to dismiss it so they don't have to think about it, and there are other people who want to dismiss it so they don't have to compete with it. So there are two different things going on; it's eliminating the competition, and it's a form of self-preservation. Maybe they do think about it. We are always being surprised, though, by people we would think are in opposition to what we do but are really very supportive. And then there are people we think are supportive who really are not.

JW: It all goes back to architecture school, typically a narrowly defined and restraining kind of education. The expanded frames of reference, the openness of dialogue, the capacity to see new relationships between

things, the cross-referencing—all of the characteristics that make the relationship between art and life a challenging research—are really not part of this education.

HM: It wasn't always so.

JW: To say the least. Architecture used to be the matrix art; that's what interests me most about it.

HM: This whole climate of professionalism didn't set in until the 19th century and didn't become fully established until the early 20th century. You didn't have this licensing thing until then. And then it became...

JW: ... this dreary profession.

AS: And now they are talking about licensing interior design.

JW: Can you imagine?

HM: I want to bring up the name of someone who until quite recently has provoked a similar response, in that he's an "artist"—Frank Gehry. Have you had any dialogue with him over the years?

JW: Yes, but I think we make him nervous on some level.

AS: Cautious.

JW: That's right, we have a cautious relationship at best. I think probably deep down inside Frank respects what we do, he understands it, but he doesn't really want to let it interfere with his own success as an artist/architect, which has been very hard won. He would never publicly give SITE any credit because he treasures the support of the architectural establishment too much. Gaining the favor of such figures as Philip Johnson and Robert Stern has been too difficult to risk losing by advocating work they detest or don't understand. Frank and I have not had a dialogue, for whatever reason. I find this a bit sad in a way, since Alison and I have such great admiration for his work.

AS: I think it again goes back to the instinct for survival. There is a finite group of potential clients and commissions, and everyone feels they have to be very protective. In the "arts" there is a slightly different spirit.

JW: I would say the art world is perhaps a little more generous. Although, on the other hand, look at the

attitude of the formalist and minimalist generation of critics toward the invasion of expressionist and narrative imagery in painting. They have tended to dismiss everything out of hand with disclaimers such as, "These people are terrible artists!" Relative to SITE's work, I would say that we are at the point where a lot of people are probably cautious about being dismissive and, at the same time, we have a very large international core of supporters.

HM: My God, you've been on the cover of *Architectural Record* three times in the past ten months!

JW: Architects are getting a little nervous about the locked-in definitions they have made for themselves. Recently, Alison and I have been getting warm embraces from people who would never have spoken to us a year ago. So the climate is changing.

AS: Actually, when we were publishing the "ON SITE" series of books, we had a more open dialogue because we were publishing other people's work, and so there was less of a threat. We weren't building anything; we weren't getting commissions.

HM: In the case of Frank Gehry, they are sort of allowing him in now. All my "progressive" friends say, "I used to think he was a fruitcake."

JW: He's a fantastic collagist and constructivist, closer to modernist traditions, however. SITE deals more with psychology. This area is dangerous because you're getting into territory that architects don't think buildings should have anything to do with. We seem to step on the toes of a lot of mainstream practitioners.

HM: Why do they think that?

JW: I'm not sure.

HM: You've written a whole book on this subject.

JW: I've written a book saying that the psychological element has been rejected, and then offering some ways to bring it into architecture. But I can't understand why more architects aren't interested in psychology. As a kid, the thing I liked the most was watching the interaction and interplay between people and places. At one time I really thought I would go into theater. I thought drama would be my destiny. And yet life is a theater, so in a way what Alison and I are doing is very much involved with theater. But why aren't architects interested in this? They literally clear the peo-

ple out before the *Architectural Record* photographers show up. God forbid a human being should appear to mar the building, to violate the pristine abstraction, or to clutter the space. This attitude precludes using social or psychological references.

HM: There are deeper reasons, don't you think? For instance, public architecture was always distinguished from private architecture by the concept of *gravitas*; you are not supposed to allude to anything private, like a joke or a dream. This is the tradition of using architecture to exercise control in the public realm, and it has been maintained and transformed over the years. We're supposed to be having a psychological revolution, and somehow mixing all this inside-outside, individual-collective. . . .

JW: Resistance is itself a psychological phenomenon. Take, for instance, the adverse professional reaction to competitions SITE has won. That's been interesting to me. I keep getting little hints from colleagues that it's some kind of fluke that our firm could win projects like Pershing Square or the Ansel Adams Center. I've been told that colleagues say Robert Stern, as a *real* architect, should have gotten the job in Los Angeles. It's a curious reaction because it's so deeply imbedded in the protective subconscious of the architectural profession. Even when you beat them at their own game, they are not willing to admit it. It really has a lot to do with the tendency we all have to dismiss something that is unfamiliar, only to reverse that position when a valuable revelation takes place and one suddenly understands the terms the artist has set forth. We've had a few natural-dialogue relationships, and one of them has been with you; but again you are the only American with whom we've ever had a comprehensive dialogue about the issues of psychology and narrative. There are a few Europeans who have shared this level of communication: conversations where you never have to explain your terms, where a dialogue starts at the center of the topic without long and tedious prefaces.

HM: I told you that the first time I became aware of you was when I saw two buildings you designed that I had dreamed: the Indeterminate Facade and the Highrise of Homes. I had seen these buildings in dreams, and my first reaction upon seeing these projects was an enormous sense of release and excitement that someone had externalized something very private inside my mind. The second, the intellectual reaction, was the even more exciting realization that here were architects who recognized that the most important dis-

covery of the 20th century was the creation of the unconscious. Architects were still dealing with a 19th- or 18th-century discovery—the machine—which had been very exciting for a while but certainly wasn't anymore, while SITE's projects were articulating the creation of the unconscious as a new basis for invention. Highrise, of course, I knew only through drawings, but I sensed that you used drawing as a tool for developing the psychological element.

JW: Drawing and building go hand in hand. One of the reasons we wanted to have a comprehensive portfolio of drawings in this book was just because of that. Drawing is one of the most spontaneous connections any artist can have to the thought process; it's the first thing you do when you start getting an idea. It's also the notational source of linguistic structure in art, the source of evolutionary symbolism. What you're doing is constantly making lines and figures that represent another reality. You are trying to make connections between some feeling you have or some thought process and its ultimate visualization. It's the spontaneous manifestation of Jung's notion of the unconscious mind as a producer of collective symbolism. It is a fertile source of iconography and what 20th-century communications is all about.

It's interesting that you dreamt two building archetypes. In psychological analysis, architectural imagery was the basis for one of Jung's first great revelations. So it does seem that architecture allows for that process of creation to unfold almost more than any other art form. People don't necessarily think of a painting or a play as archetypal in itself, whereas they do think of a building as a metaphor for the most fundamental source of protection and enclosure—the womb. There are a lot of plateaux of the mind that seem to parallel architecture. It is a matrix, a place where events in your life gain significance, where important connections are made.

Virtually all of SITE's work has been based on using architecture as subject matter, much more than as an objective of creativity. This is probably the least understood aspect of our work in terms of the usual architectural discourse. The point is that we are really displacing the need to *invent* or *create* forms in architecture; in other words, we are reversing the modernist traditions of shape-making, form-making, and space-making with the idea that architecture already exists in the mind as an archetype through which we can filter ideas. Our position is totally different from that of other architects.

HM: There are many who would say that of all the

arts architecture is the one that is least capable of representing a psychological state, because we are conditioned when we look at a painting, when we read a poem, even when we see a movie, to regard it as the very personal work of an individual artist. All of our inheritance from the romantic tradition encourages our receptivity to those works of art as the representation of a subjective state, whereas architecture, by its public nature, is supposed to stand hierarchically above subjective states. Buildings occupy a public stage, and therefore the subjectivity we associate with psychology is supposed to be drained away, presumably so that the public can tolerate it.

JW: That argument holds up only if you believe that ideas derived from early modernism continue to have relevance in this world of information. The Villa Savoy of Le Corbusier, for example, was a *narrative* building. It was a structure that in its time became a visual metaphor for a combustion engine, the description of a kinetic process that was connected to machine technology. In his writings, Le Corbusier offered all kinds of equations himself. It was a building with subject matter, with narrative content. It was misunderstood by his followers. Every architect fell in love with his seductive sculptural forms and all of those innovative space dissections, but without Le Corbusier's conviction, they became formalistic, hollow, and academic formulas for architecture thereafter.

I would say that the argument for architecture taking on public meaning—including psychological meaning—is impressive. It is supported throughout history. Any past building with religious iconography would be considered as having appealed to psychology. These structures used images that were universally recognizable. So the real argument against contemporary iconography, it seems to me, is the claim that there is no consensus iconography today. My answer to counter this is that consensus iconography still exists; it's just not politically or religiously mandated. It doesn't grow intrinsically out of a consensus situation, since it is shaped by the collective unconscious.

It has traditionally been the province of the writer, the playwright, the poet, perhaps the painter or filmmaker, to use psychology. Those disciplines are naturally connected to the mind in recent tradition, and there is no implied "practical function," as in architecture. They have no function other than to communicate. However, only in this century has function been considered an expressive limitation, excluding the possibility of psychological references. This is because use or service in a building has not been submerged in the greater purpose of communicating information. Historically,

buildings had their role as media, as means of telling stories. This explains the richness of iconography we value today. This was the medieval and Renaissance building's primary reason for existing. So I guess you could say that I'm going back to an earlier idea, an idea that's been totally displaced by the enslavement to abstraction. Peter Eisenman was perfectly right when he referred to postmodernism as "functionalism in drag": underlying its decorative camouflage is the same formalist/modernist building; nothing fundamental on a conceptual level has changed. SITE's idea is the opposite. We use archetypes, particularly things that appear very familiar, and then manipulate them in such a way that they take on other meanings.

HM: The obvious historical precedent on the subject of architecture conceived as an artistic expression is expressionism, particularly German expressionism. Have you thought about extracting any lesson from the failure of that movement in connection with your work?

JW: I'm not sure that it failed. Changing tastes are such that whatever gains priority for the moment, or whatever seems to be approved, takes over as the dominant movement or the dominant idea of that time. Expressionism was merely eclipsed by modernism and abstractionism, after all; it never died out, it just got pushed aside.

AS: Just as everything else was eclipsed by it. I don't necessarily feel that it represents a failure so much as the fact that something else, for a variety of reasons, moves in and takes over. If you go through the archives of MIT, which was the first school of architecture in the United States, and where they have the entire collection of drawings intact from the first student projects, you see that there is a definitive cut-off point, a one-year period, literally, when the drawings changed from Beaux-Arts washes to hard-line grids on boards.

HM: The same can be said of the eclipse of expressionism by the idea of *Sachlichkeit*. And actually it was many of the same people that we now associate with being pioneers of objectivity, including Gropius and Mies, who came out of and were themselves part of the expressionist movement. To many of the expressionists themselves, in other words, expressionism had been a wrong turn.

AS: It had limitations in expressing the new world that they saw before them and that they wanted to connect with.

JW: Yes. The compulsion to connect with the new technological world was, for whatever reason, a more forceful idea than the idea of expressionism. I don't think the movement was ever intellectually motivated enough to have enduring status. Somehow surrealism, for example, became a much more dominant and persuasive force in 20th-century art than expressionism. Dadaism also became far more influential as time went on; that probably had a great deal to do with the fact that it dealt so much with the mind. Expressionism dealt with the mind, but on a much more elementary, visceral, and obvious level.

AS: I would agree with that, except that there also may be certain parallels between the world that we live in and that other point in time. So maybe the reason it's communicating to us on that level is because there are some conceptual or psychological parallels with our world and with the information in our world. I think that's why things go in cycles, where certain ideas become irrelevant and then suddenly emerge again. They are rediscovered in a sense; even though things are changing, there are perceptions in common with certain other periods.

JW: Alison's right. It has to do with this sense of relevance.

AS: The message becomes relevant again. It speaks to us.

JW: Traditional nonobjectivism and traditional abstraction as we know it, the kind that has become pervasive in architecture, grew out of motivations that no longer have anything to do with the world of narrative and information explosion. For students now to sit around and make endless little Schröder houses and play with twisted axes and nine-square grids is a totally meaningless exercise. They have no future except perhaps in some distant time when they might be resurrected as archetypal clichés and used for their humorous or ironic references. After all, abstraction in architecture was originally motivated by a faith in technology. To continue abstraction today is a throw-back to early constructivism without the incentives of the machine age and socialist politics. In other words, abstraction has become style, or worse, fashion.

HM: Don't you find it very curious that somebody like Kenneth Frampton, who is obviously very strongly opposed to historicism, would favor an architect like Richard Meier, who essentially just represents the area of history he happens to feel most in sympathy with?

JW: I think all of these things become a little bit academic because they are intended to create a kind of protective shell that the architectural profession and its attendant criticism needs for insulation. On the most basic level, architects still want to be abstractionists. When I was in college, and through the early 1960s, Duchamp was always considered a very peripheral figure. He was treated by most critics as an historical curiosity, an isolated phenomenon—always there, but never accorded the veneration given to the dominant forces of abstractionism. I clearly remember the kind of critical applause the abstract expressionist movement and its artists generated, and how you simply never heard much about Duchamp. There were still constant references to Picasso and cubism and constructivism, but little about Duchamp's contributions. As our society shifted to the information era, from the technological to the post-technological context, it became more and more apparent to certain artists—Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Robert Morris, and others—that at the edge of the art world was this incredible figure, Duchamp. He had managed to dedicate his whole life to dealing with information, the unconscious mind, and the connections between the observed and the unseen. As Duchamp stated, "If a three-dimensional object casts a two-dimensional shadow, then why isn't a three-dimensional object the shadow of a fourth dimension?" He consistently played with this incredible level of dialectic and observation. Art before Duchamp was pretty much without this level of dialectic, and it wasn't cross-referenced to this degree.

As for architecture, it wasn't part of this dialogue at all when SITE started. We were clearly rooted in a great respect for Duchamp's pioneering, and in an interest in the unconscious mind as a fertile producer of various kinds of symbols—elusive, not fixed; symbols that change, fluctuate, and connect to various references outside architecture. I am always interested to see if our buildings will make associations in people's minds with ideas that were not even part of our original motivations. I guess it remains to be seen whether this idea of narrative and information is, in fact, a valid direction. You can't be sure of that until the distant future has made that assessment.

AS: There's always the risk that as you move forward, you're not understanding the implications of what you are doing. Or, in a sense, you're putting other kinds of connections together. The question becomes, are you going to make the connections that you set out to? And how is that information received? Does it reach people? Sometimes ideas don't connect for sev-

eral generations, or until another point in time when those ideas finally communicate to a society where that dialogue becomes relevant. You're never sure why something doesn't work. Is it because it's not an interesting idea, or because it's not a point in time where those connections can be made?

JW: On my most instinctual level, I feel that a great deal of art isn't really dealing sufficiently with psychology and information; it's actually distanced from information by its exclusivity. So there is this urgent need for art to take the raw material of the unconscious mind and create a structure where ideas about the world are made publicly accessible again. Architecture is certainly one of those art forms that has been totally dehumanized and deprived of its iconic role. But in a funny way, the dehumanized object that we call architecture is also an archetype that can be seen as the matrix for all of society's psychic fears. It's significant that apocalyptic films like *Night of the Living Dead* are set in oppressive architectural contexts; such environments are the reflexive choice of filmmakers as the appropriate setting for horror to take place.

HM: In my forthcoming book *Narrative Architecture* I have a section about how the standard plot in many horror movies involves the threat of individual beings converted into robots or vegetable humanoids, units without a mind of their own, members of a cult, etc. The reason this is horrible is because it violates the central cultural narrative that we've all been inhabiting for 250 years, in which we are supposed to do essentially the opposite—to free ourselves from being clones and achieve some sort of autonomy. But this horror-movie plot is the overreaching narrative in architecture; the highest service an architect is supposed to perform is to come up with a system for making everything the same. That is not quite true of any other art.

JW: Yes, because it's a misreading of the original social-reform motivations of early 20th-century architecture. Designers were going to save the world. Part of that motivation was to salvage the cities with low-cost dwellings and an equalizing society. Part of that translated into a new kind of visual raw material. There was a vocabulary or iconography of expedience to go with low-cost, socially motivated aspirations.

HM: Since you're now responsible for educating designers, I'd like to ask how this affects your educational philosophy and the education of your students. Basically every school is still operating on the assumption that architecture differs from, say, painting because it

is thought of in terms of systems; you're supposed to do something that has a universal application. Are you teaching them to throw out all methodology, or are you using a different methodology that we ought to know about?

JW: The Bauhaus created a role model for the architecture school of the 20th century by formulating an integrated program involving all the crafts and arts within the matrix of architecture. Architecture was then considered a celebration of the technological and social revolution. Now we are in the information revolution; the principles may still apply, but the motivations and objectives have changed. The Bauhaus had a cohesiveness in what it produced, even though it was also very disparate. There was a great variety of people working there. Their cohesion was the idea of expressing the new sensibilities of the technological world. Although we still have this technological world, we don't quite maintain faith in the same way. Times have changed too much. I believe that the information revolution is what these integrated art forms are trying to express now, or should be trying to express. And this requires a different kind of education.

Andy Warhol was an artist who fully understood these societal changes. He was a product of the information and media age, and he managed to make connections between the act of being an artist, the life of being an artist, and the kind of commercial context in which he found himself. He threaded these things together so that the very act of being projected through media, being shaped by media, was his persona as an artist. This was clearly a different way of creating art than the painter working in his studio and producing a highly crafted canvas full of expressive emotions.

Whether this idea can be understood and used in education is another matter. This is why we mounted an architecture criticism program at Parsons School of Design. Developing the critical mind is a way of precipitating the condition of enlightenment, the condition of using language effectively and connecting it to psychological motivations. The educational idea was to create a context where this could happen. We hoped that the research would then filter outward to all of the students in the department and we would avoid the kind of strictly formalist atmosphere of a Columbia or a Princeton architecture department. We anticipate we will eventually be dealing with a new educational, as well as architectural, language.

The one element that I think should be part of education has traditionally been intrinsic to most great art. In architecture school, they usually start with exercises in geometry, and then students deal with various ar-

chitectonic idioms and, ultimately, with design clichés. That is *not* how art is created. Art is created when the hunter slays the deer and then feels the need to depict that event in graphic form. He returns to the cave and realizes that he cannot tell the story without means of a visual shorthand or some kind of communicative symbolism. So he draws a picture of the slain deer with the arrow in it. As time goes on, the deer with the penetrating arrow evolves into a circle with an intersecting line. This formation of language and the making of abstract and linguistic connections is a slow, thoughtful, evolutionary process. But at any point in that evolution, even though people start using the abbreviated circle with the line as part of common usage, it is rendered lifeless if it does not refer back to the original hunt, the urgent narrative act of shooting the deer in the first place.

My educational philosophy is based on learning the building arts without losing the earliest origins of habitat and their earliest linguistic implications. Taught this way, students will tend to think of architecture as communication with a constantly evolving language, as opposed to a compendium of styles.

HM: It seems to me there is a critical psychological difference between what the Bauhaus undertook in terms of developing the language of a machine age and what it would mean for a school to become involved with an information age. The machine gave the architect a model that essentially existed outside himself. It was a machine, it was a production line, we all knew what it looked like; it was basically over there outside ourselves. When Marshall McLuhan came along in the 1960s and wrote about media, what was made very clear from the publication of *Understanding Media* was that media have meaning only as extensions of ourselves; they aren't something out there. So, ultimately, what your method of education and what indeed your architecture is involved with is a new model of self. The bigger story with narrative architecture is not the object, not the building, but the self.

JW: Absolutely. Andy Warhol understood that the self-portrait was the core of salvation in our age. The basis of the self-portrait is the cry of the spirit to be released and to become identifiable again as something tangible. This energy is very much there in all the arts. The whole notion of narrative is of something that's highly cerebral and psychological, and at the same time very basic, almost banal. One thing I really liked in the Italian critic Achille Bonito Oliva's description of the trans-avant-garde is the connection he made between the discarded elements of our society and the artist as

a nomadic spirit passing through and utilizing this debris to create a fragmentary, personal, and narrative art. Now the artist—and this should include the architect—is engaged in the collaging of information. I like that idea, but it's hard to do in architecture; it's easier to accomplish in painting because it operates within a manageable size. In architecture you have these ponderous building materials and technical restraints, but it never seems impossible to do.

HM: The last time there was content in architecture it was directly denotative. We all knew the rose stood for the Virgin Mary, etc. But the moment you release it into the sphere of connotation, you are forcing people to narrate their own stories. A lot of people have a great deal of fear of exposing themselves in this way, which is why they resist the idea of content.

JW: Especially in architecture.

HM: Yes, because that's supposed to be a reality outside themselves.

JW: Well, this goes back to my ideas about architectural education, back to the man who first drew the deer in the cave. Even if he had seen many other hunters draw an animal, he might have wanted to draw it in his own way rather than copy the conventions. The Lascaux deer, for example, are quite different from their counterparts in the Altamira caves; they are clearly different interpretations.

HM: Have you had to deal as an instructor with this level of fear?

JW: Yes, because students have been taught visual rhetoric. They've absorbed all of these clichés without any personal input. I tell them, let's start with the content. Let's start with what we want to say, and then we'll go back and analyze whether or not we can say it through architecture. Alison and I are very good examples of that creative process. For instance, I do virtually all of the freehand drawings because, over the years, I have learned to draw very quickly and accurately. But Alison and I are an integrated team of two allied sensibilities; we flow back and forth with this dialogue of ideas. In virtually every project the unfolding of these ideas evolves organically through dialogue with Alison and the architect Josh Weinstein. It is interesting to watch the ideas unfold. Alison and Josh cover pages with all sorts of alternative interpretations of a project, ideas that our minds would instinctively create no matter how a concept started or

who thought of it. So, in a funny way, even though the drawings are mostly by my own hand, the ideas have been developed collectively.

HM: How much of it is verbal, that is, when you are in the development stage, is the verbal exchange first, or would you put the visual, the drawing, above it all?

JW: Verbal.

AS: I think it starts with information and verbal dialogue, and then it moves into drawings. At some point the visual and the verbal are simultaneous. That's probably the progression.

JW: It's a long association with an unfolding idea. Certainly, every time we start there are a lot of eliminations that are almost automatic. The tendency of architects is to make things more complex than they really are. They want to complicate the floor plan to show some kind of formal invention. They want to beef up the act or add lots of materials or make their building fancy. There's a motivation to make it more purposeful, more physically attractive than conceptually interesting. Our motivations are almost entirely involved in another kind of discourse, such as, why are we putting anything to paper at all? Will we end up with something that will communicate to anybody? Will there be any message carried by the act of doing this? If there seems to be a convincing enough answer to these questions, then we proceed.

HM: We are sitting beneath the columns of Louis Sullivan, whose myth sticks in our minds—the object lesson of what happens when people try to go too far in the direction of vision against what their contemporaries are prepared at that time to accept. How does it feel to be working, literally, in Sullivan's shadow?

AS: We love living in Sullivan's shadow. I wish he had more shadow to live in, that there were more of his buildings around. On the one hand, it's a joy to be in this building because he is one of our heroes; on the other hand, it's a very painful reminder of the past, as is so often the case. Sullivan is just one example of a visionary and genius who ran afoul of his times, who was out of sync with the sensibility of his times. This is something that I'm very interested in: the psychological factors that make it possible to connect and to communicate a vision, as opposed to the forces that block this communication. I think it also might have something to do with personality, not just vision. Why did Sullivan die in abject poverty, recognized and sup-

ported by a handful of his peers, embittered, suffering? It seems like such a colossal waste. When you look back in history you find people like Sullivan, and there are many—Macintosh and Frank Lloyd Wright didn't have an easy time of it. When we start to list our heroes, we wonder why we ever try at all.

HM: One thing you do have that Sullivan didn't, which seems to me to be a very important factor in people's response to your work, is the comic element. Do you see that as an advantage, or do you see that as something unfortunate—SITE's "one-liners"—that you are trying to live down?

AS: I think that humor has been a very difficult ingredient for people to understand. There are people who now gravitate towards us because of it, but certainly in the beginning anything that had humor in it was perceived as a joke. People couldn't see the difference, particularly in the architectural profession. It was like introducing the plague. The feeling was that you must be a prankster. This seems so alien to me in view of the fact that humor is a part of life and the world we live in. Can you imagine a world without humor?

JW: It's the last plateau between oneself and the apocalypse. The reason I feel humor is always relevant is because if you can't laugh, you commit suicide.

HM: I think humor also takes on a particular significance as a possible way of rewriting that tragic narrative of the visionary martyr.

JW: If you cannot retain a certain amount of objectivity about or distance from what's going on in the world and approach it with humor, you risk going over the edge of sanity. One cannot possibly accept the "serious" world as being truly serious.

AS: You would go crazy.

JW: Today it isn't even one-on-one aggressive madness; it's two or three times removed. There is a linguistic madness where people talk about mega-deaths as though they were stock-market statistics not connected to people with seared flesh, people who are suffering. In this context, consider the folly of Ronald Reagan and all the people who support him. This situation is a product of the information age; so you can see how an artist might want to convert that condition of madness into public art that's humorous, ironic, cautionary, and as accessible as possible. I think Gothic

sculptors must have felt the same way. In carving those cathedrals the artisans must have been motivated by an obsessive desire to communicate the essence of religious life and to convert that energy into buildings. I think the best examples of the integration of art and architecture have this narrative responsibility. I'm not making a case for art as nothing more than a form of populist media, because I think that art also has a role as a means of critical commentary and as a societal monitor. I do believe that public communication is incredibly important.

HM: Your ability to use comedy seems to me related to a transformation that's going on in a larger story, the story of romanticism and modernism. Sullivan's is an archetypal romantic story because it was integral to the romantic story that everything be sort of tragic. The artist was supposed to suffer terribly, everything had to be terribly grave and serious, perhaps because by being serious and tragic the romantic artist essentially earned his right to appropriate the patron's power to control things instead of being a servant and just carrying out commands. But it seems to me that your use of comedy reflects a new relationship that takes us to the end of that story, that big, tragic, oppositional long phase of romantic and modern art.

JW: The humor that I most admire deals with multiple levels of meaning, like the drama of Samuel Beckett, Woody Allen, and the best of Edward Albee. In this kind of humor, you know it isn't just a joke as a belly laugh; there is something else going on behind the facade of humor. It is both a diversion from and a product of the omnipresent awareness of the apocalypse.

HM: But you're standing in a different relationship to that. Your angle on the horror of life is not that modern life is scary and bleak, and so you're going to make your work scary and bleak as well. You have a different angle, not only toward the potential catastrophes and real catastrophes of modern life, but also toward your audience, toward the public, a shift that is important in the evolution of the romantic artist story. You're dealing with information in the information age, and you really can't portray yourself as rejects because, as you say, you are in fact the darlings of the media, which is a more important context than that of the architectural profession. The profession as a whole is not operating in any conscious, honest way on this level.

JW: Yes, exactly.

AS: In terms of reflecting the horrors of the modern world, there are many aspects of our work that are really more of a black humor. But for me, the human dimension, the spirit of the human being, has to come through for us to survive, and I feel that's very much linked to humor. This is, in a sense, the human factor; it's the energy or the strength, and it has to do with seeing things in perspective and with humor.

HM: I get the sense that you are apologizing for the fact that you have this talent for being humorous.

AS: Apologizing? Oh no. I find nothing to apologize for about humor. On the other hand, jokes and one-liners, which I don't like, and which our work is not about, are something else. This aspect of our work has definitely been misunderstood in the past, primarily in the United States, but all of this is changing. This combination of humor and the layering of information is an important factor in making our work accessible on many different levels. Why does everyone from Laurie Mallet's artist friends, who are highly sophisticated, to the garbage man or postman respond when they walk into that house? Look at the vast spectrum of people who responded to Highway '86—over 100,000 a day, young, old, every profession, nationality, level of education—why?

JW: There was some kind of critique of Highway '86 at the Architectural Association in London, which concluded that it was "too popular."

AS: Too popular. Right.

JW: Too popular. That's the new problem.

HM: But this is exactly what I am talking about, this shift that is so important. When you come in here it's unlike any other architect's office; it is not about withholding.

JW: No. Exactly.

HM: It's about generosity, about adding. And that represents a fundamental shift in what has been defined as good. Part of the legacy of Sullivan is the belief that the 1893 Chicago World's Fair was popular and therefore terrible. This translates into a value system where if it's popular—whether it's South Street Seaport or Highway '86 or whatever—it must be awful.

AS: Some things that are popular are awful.

JW: But very few structures that have a sustained unpopularity have been good. On the other hand, works that have been blindingly popular in the beginning can, with time, be assessed as great (and sometimes not so great).

AS: And sometimes we get used to things that are awful, and they become popular simply because they are not as bad as what comes next, which is a lot worse. These things become familiar to us by comparison. More than wanting to be popular, we want to communicate. We want to be part of that whole communication process that we feel exists, that you embrace when you move into the public domain. Look at New York as a city, for example. I just had a discussion with a filmmaker who asked us to answer a series of questions: What does architecture mean to us? What is architecture about? What is the most important thing in architecture? My response was “people.” People are an integral part of our projects every step of the way, beginning with the dialogue we have with our clients in the gathering of information, the relationship and exchange we have with the people who build the work (in many cases we participate in a very hands-on process), and finally the response of people and fascination with how they relate to and use the work. This is also very much what New York is about for me—total street theater—and why I like it as a city. The thing that fascinates me about New York is the street experience that exists here, unlike any other city in the world. In other cities I become absorbed in the history, the architecture, the artifacts. New York becomes a backdrop to me or a big set for what is happening out there on the streets. That is definitely the arena. Our projects are not complete until people inhabit them. They form the final layer.

JW: This audience participation in our work is as much a part of the final product as a frame is to a painting. Our final integrated element is this accessibility to people.

AS: I do agree completely with the point that we’ve gone from being an artist or an architect as a miserable, tortured soul in an ivory tower or locked studio to being a participant in society. But wasn’t that always the tradition historically? The artist played a vital role prior to the development of other forms of documentation, such as filmmaking and other media. It was the artist who provided that information.

JW: Very much so. If Alison and I had our way, we would have done our work in the 14th century.

AS: We always imagine ourselves as the court-appointed architects, of course.

HM: Except that your “court” seems to be the media. Virtually every successful architect these days has learned how to use the media, but usually with a certain air of embarrassment; the place is supposed to be the thing. You seem to accept media as a legitimate extension of the medium of architecture; the reproduced image, in other words, is a reality.

AS: That is a reality to us. And also, quite frankly, public space being as vulnerable as it is, sometimes that’s the only lasting memory. Experiencing architecture as space that encloses you or that you participate in is certainly different from experiencing it as a two-dimensional image. On the other hand, the image is part of the reality of the world we live in, a world of information, and we may be headed more and more in that direction. God knows, maybe one day there may be no physicality to architecture at all.

JW: I guess that goes back to our tendency to want to be filmmakers. One kindred spirit, in this regard, is the director of *Blue Velvet*. We would really like to meet David Lynch. I feel he may be an artistic blood brother. He consistently uses archetypes, banality, popular iconography. He’s also frequently misunderstood. I’ve read reviews that critique *Blue Velvet* for its script, which I can’t believe. They reject Lynch’s sit-com dialogue. This type of commentary is like condemning SITE’s projects because they use familiar objects as trigger mechanisms. Also, as in architecture, there is an academic code language in filmmaking. Lynch broke a lot of the rules in that film, while still remaining within the traditional narrative frame of reference. He utilized the reflex notion of a Hollywood film and made it into something radically different and perverse. Instead of submitting to the old Hollywood formula, Lynch transformed the familiar clichés into the subject matter of the film. This is what SITE is trying to achieve in architecture.

There’s no question that there is a subversive element in our work. Perhaps that is a deficit as well, because sometimes one gets so far out on a limb in terms of sensibility and attitude that neither colleagues nor audience are willing to join the dialogue. I just hope our chosen course is not artistically suicidal. Louis Sullivan is a perfect example of talent condemned by the artist’s own commitment. I have always loved Sullivan’s idea that a building could evolve like a growing plant, and the notion that decoration was intrinsic to this concept. It is certainly disheartening that this major figure in

the history of architecture could be completely discarded, and only recently resurrected. It seems as though someone during the past 30 years could have figured out that Sullivan's most important message was that one of the primary goals of architecture is communication. It's an odd thing. Alison and I love architecture because it is a comprehensive matrix for life. We like the whole notion of making something that encourages people to participate, that deals with the public arena, the public message, the public delivery

of ideas. But the way architecture is generally practiced I find reprehensible, and, in cases of artistic neglect like Sullivan, absolutely immoral. It often seems like a profession of closed minds and rigid formulas. One is rarely asked by the presence of a building to change one's mind about some idea or issue, to alter one's perceptions. That has always been my qualification for art: Did it change my mind about something?

1. A&U, Site Extra Edition (1986), p. 5.

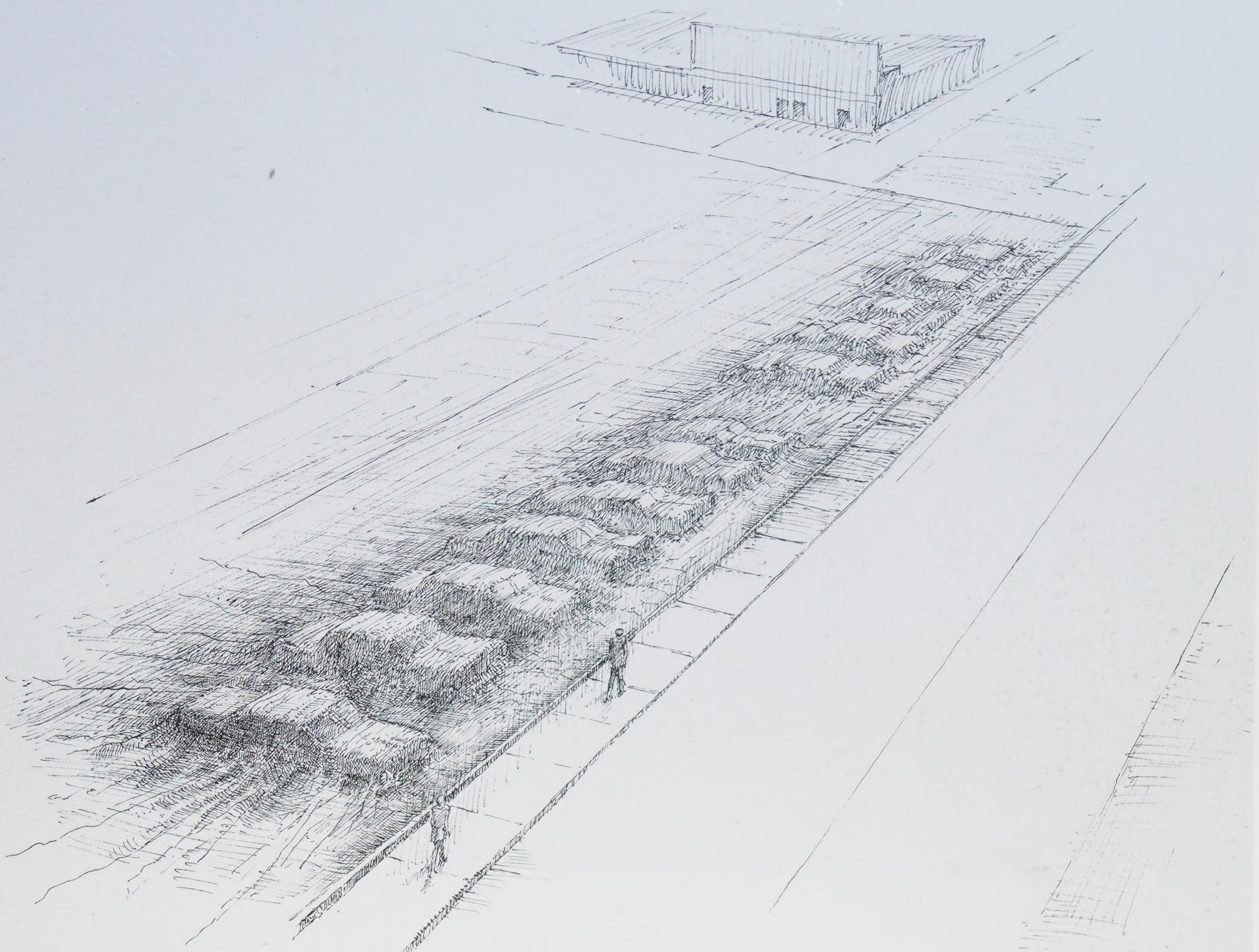
S K E T C H B O O K



Ghost Parking Lot - Hamden, Conn.

Wing SITE
1977

Ghost Parking Lot, 1977, Hamden, Connecticut: General view of cars encased in asphalt
Pen and ink on paper, 14" × 17"



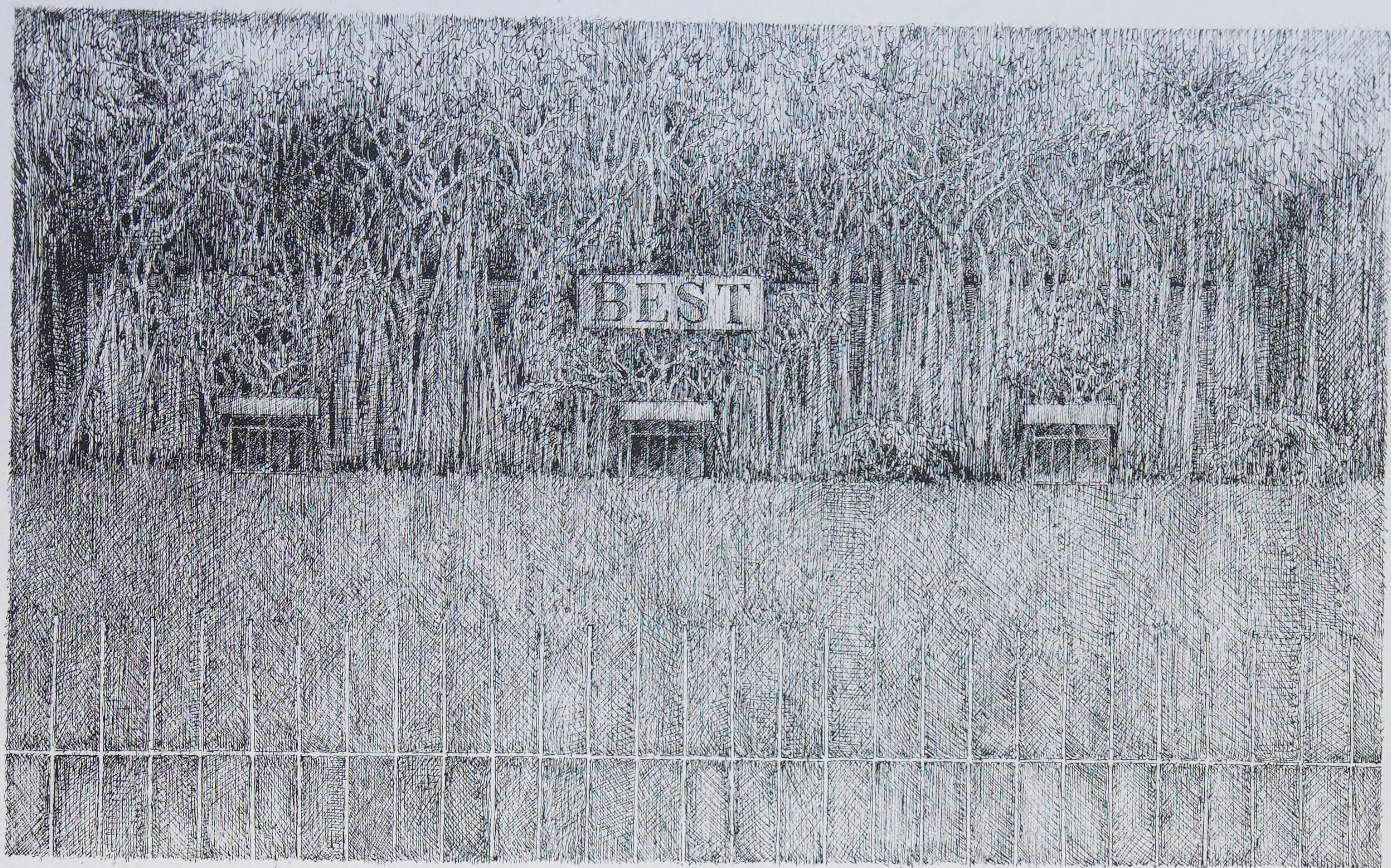
Hamden Mall - New Haven, Conn. - Parking Lot Project

WINE 1977

Ghost Parking Lot, 1977, Hamden, Connecticut: General view of project
Pen and ink on paper, 14" x 17"



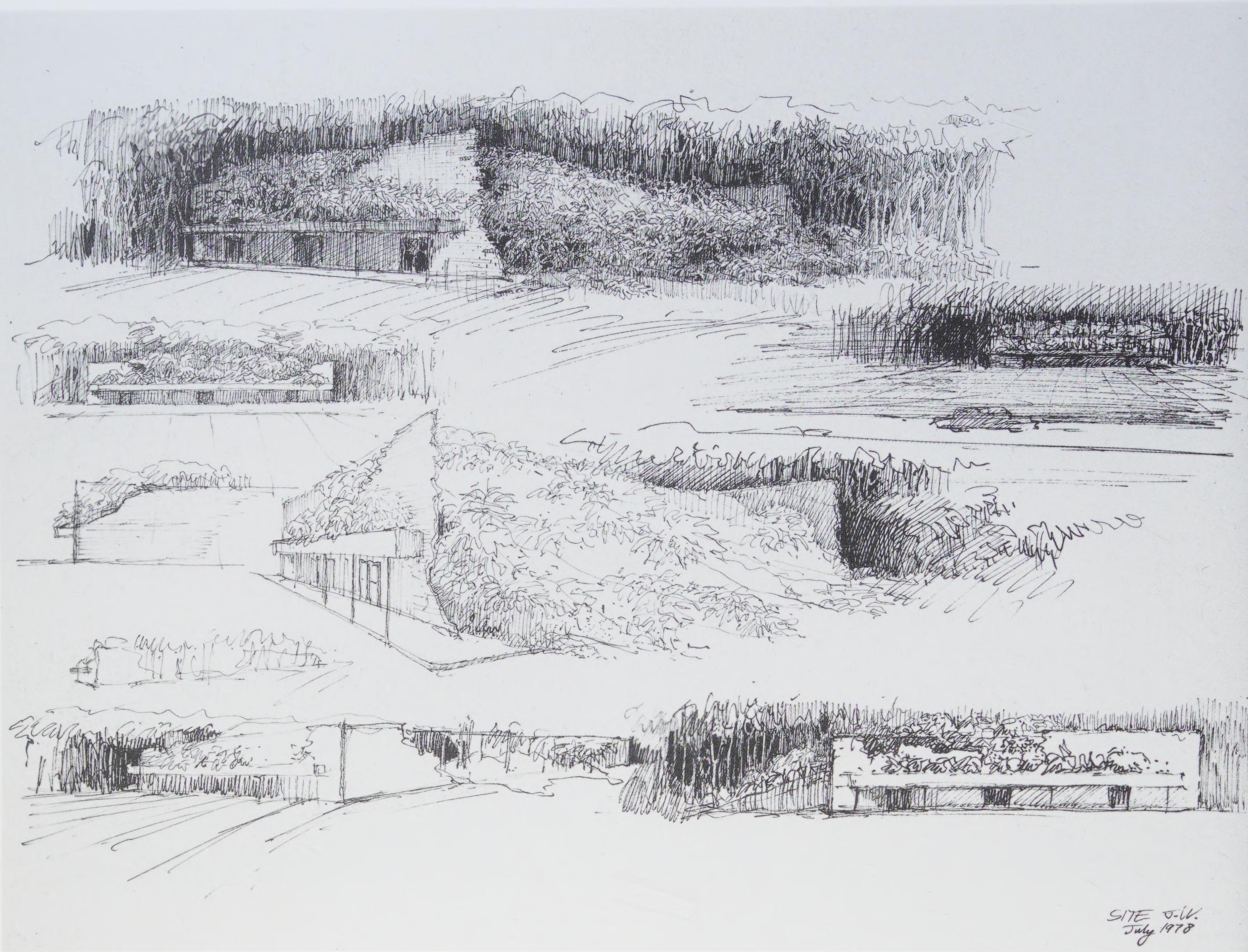
*Best Forest Building, 1978, Richmond, Virginia: Elevation showing penetration of trees
Pen and ink on paper, 14" × 17", collection Sydney and Frances Lewis, Richmond, Virginia*



BEST RICHMOND SHOWROOM

WIRE, STE 1978

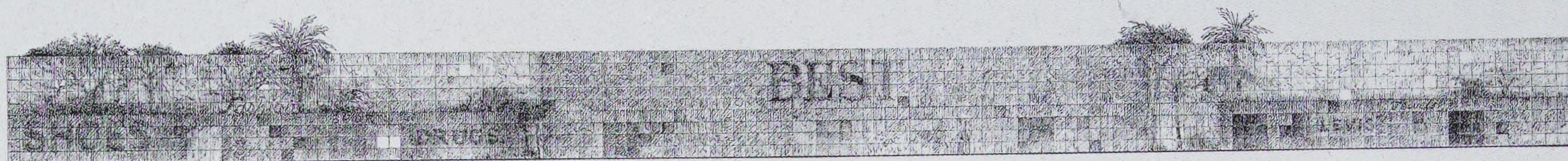
*Best Forest Building, 1978, Richmond, Virginia: Front elevation
Pen and ink on paper, 11" × 17"*



*Best Forest Building, 1978, Richmond, Virginia: Studies of various landscape penetrations
Pen and ink on paper, 14" × 17", collection the Museum of Modern Art, New York*



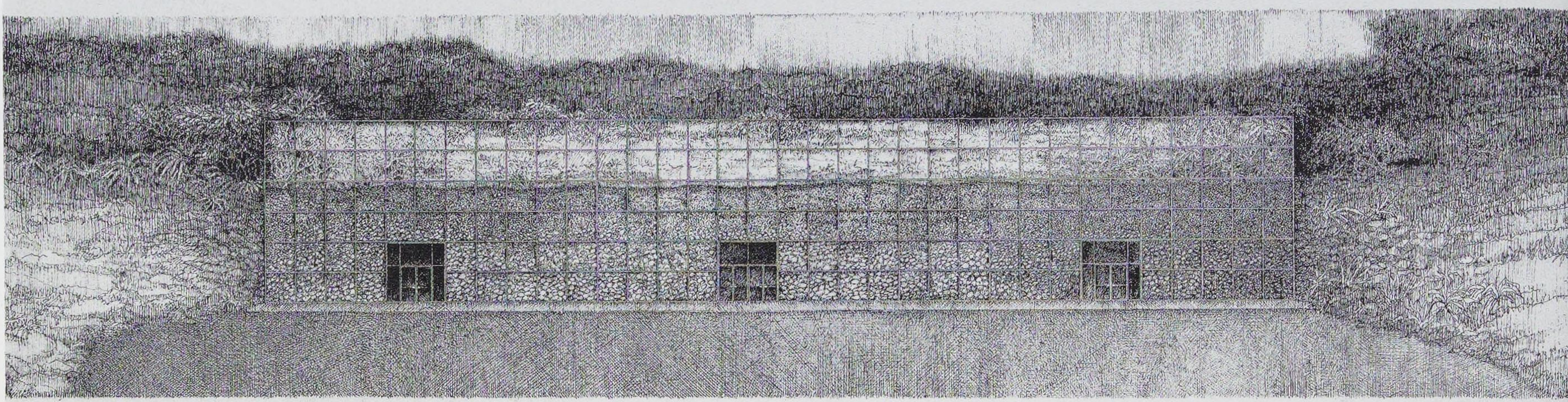
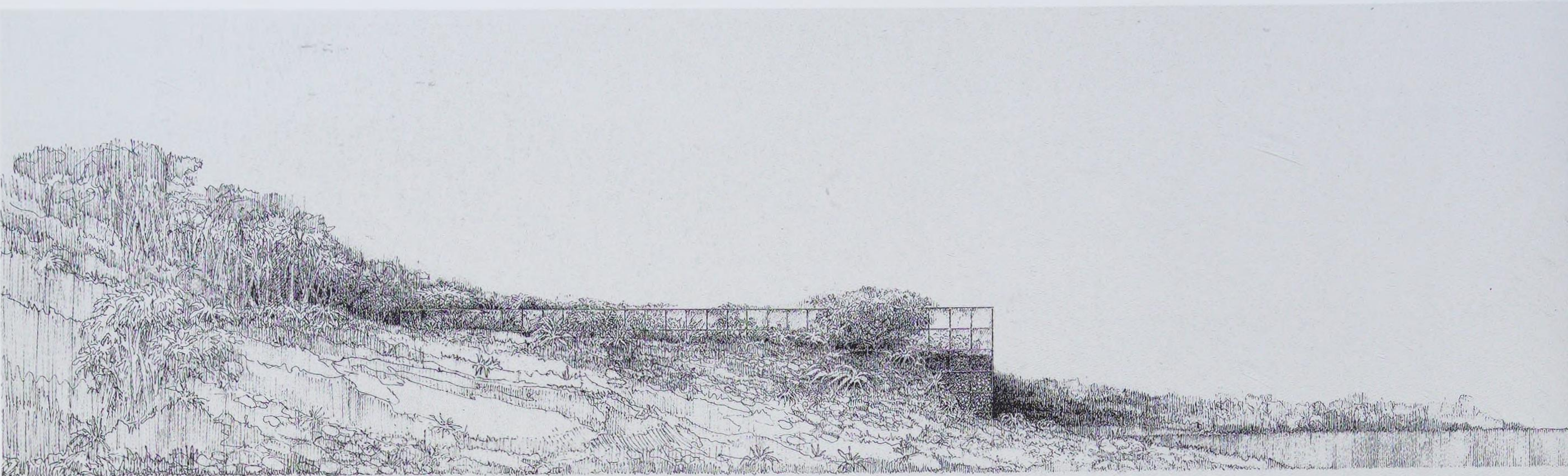
*Best Forest Building, 1978, Richmond, Virginia: Perspective studies of various landscape penetrations
Pen and ink on paper, 14" × 17"*



*Water Gallery, 1979, Miami, Florida: Front elevation showing water wall enclosure
Pen and ink on paper, 12" × 40"*



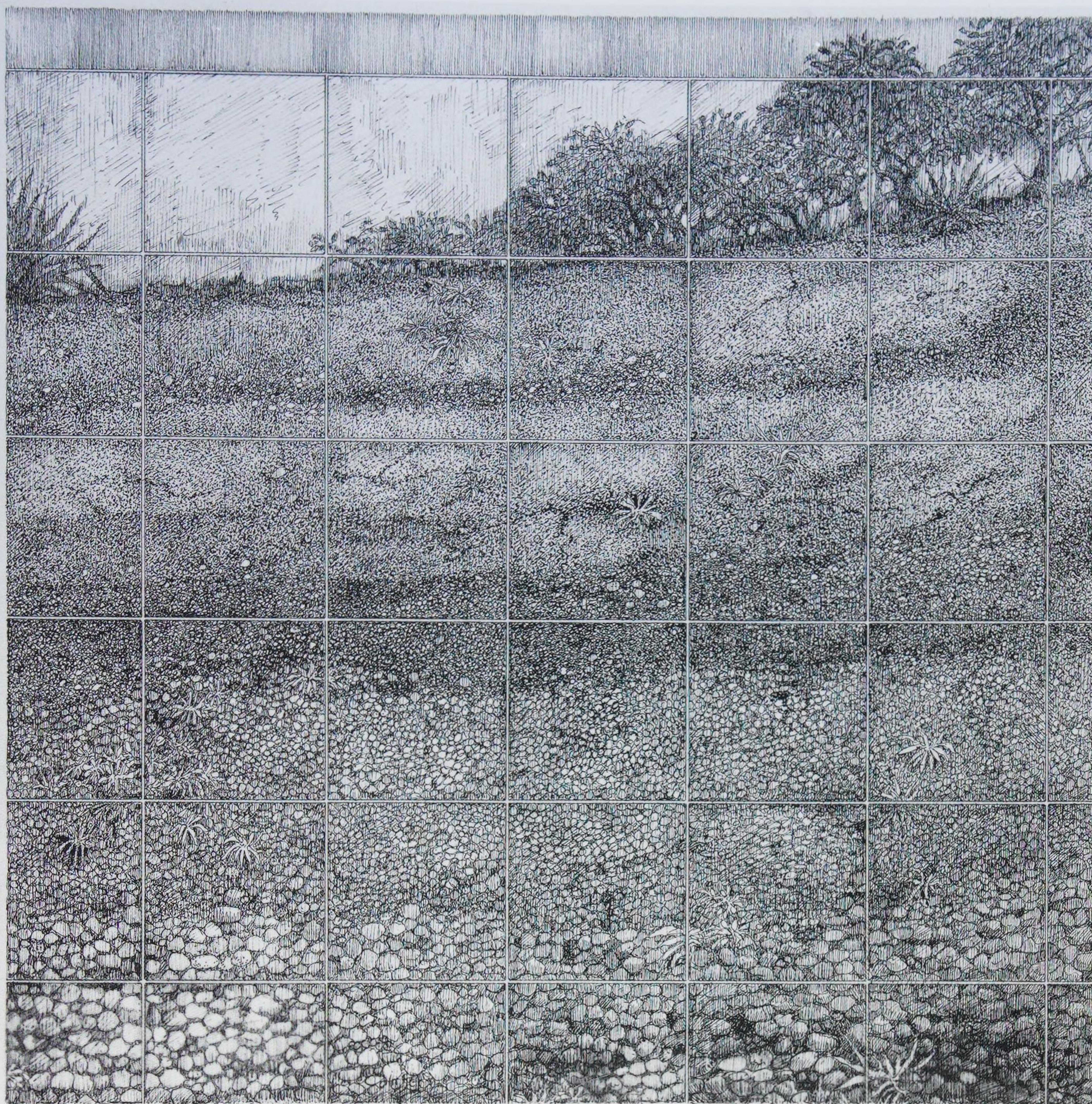
*Scale Reference Project, 1979, Nonspecific site: Front elevation
Pen and ink on paper, 18" × 24"*



TERRARIUM BUILDING - VERSION II

SITE 1979 J.W.

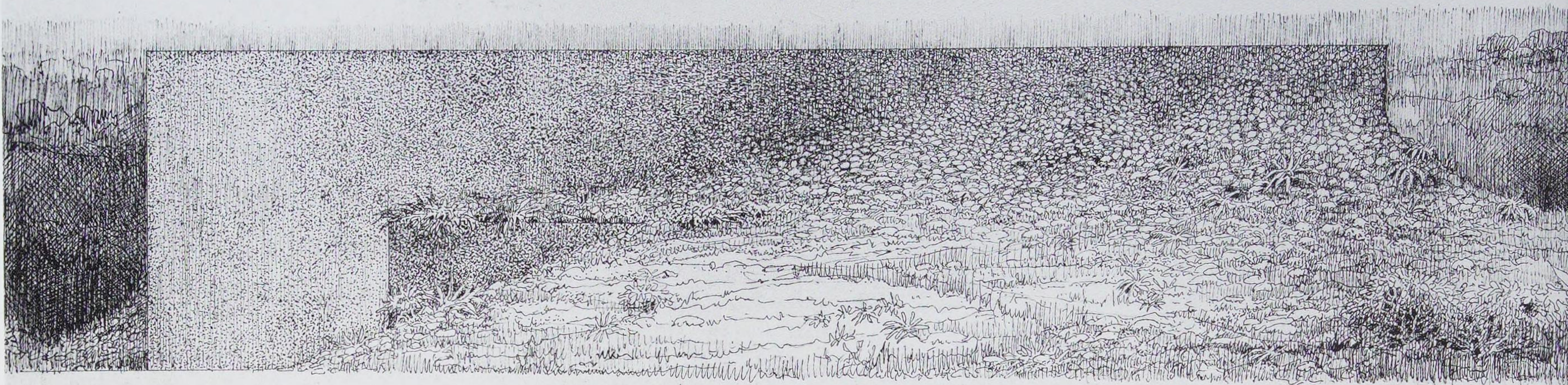
*Best Terrarium Showroom, 1979, South San Francisco, California: Side and front elevations showing penetration of landscape within glass terrarium walls
Pen and ink on paper, 24" × 30", collection the Museum of Modern Art, New York*



SECTION OF WALL ELEVATION SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO "TERRARIUM SHOWROOM"

SITE 1979 J.W.

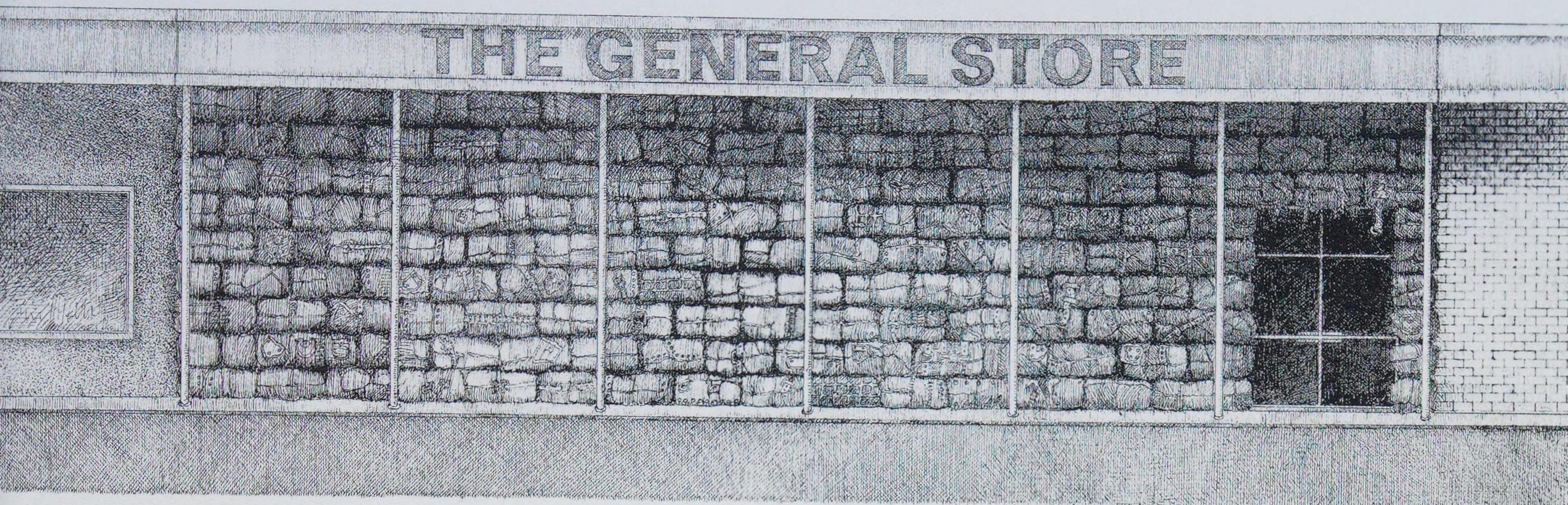
*Best Terrarium Showroom, 1979, South San Francisco, California: Section of front elevation showing glass enclosure and earth strata
Pen and ink on paper, 14" × 17"*



BEST SHOWROOM - SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO METAMORPHOSIS PROJECT

SITE 1979 J.W.

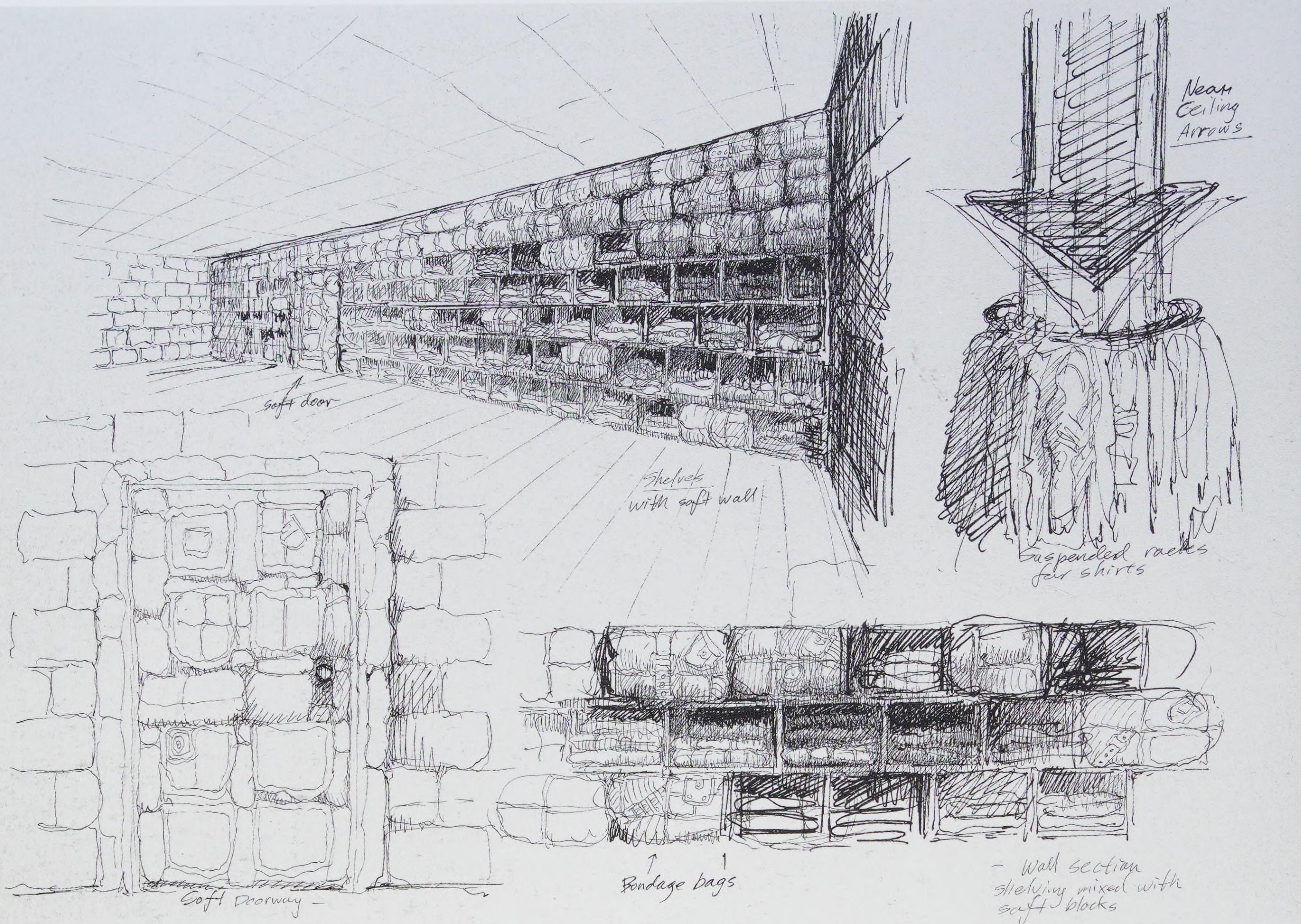
Metamorphosis Project, 1979, South San Francisco, California: Side elevation showing integration of building and landscape
Pen and ink on paper, 14" × 17"



THE GENERAL STORE WASHINGTON, D.C.

SITE SSSW--W. 1980

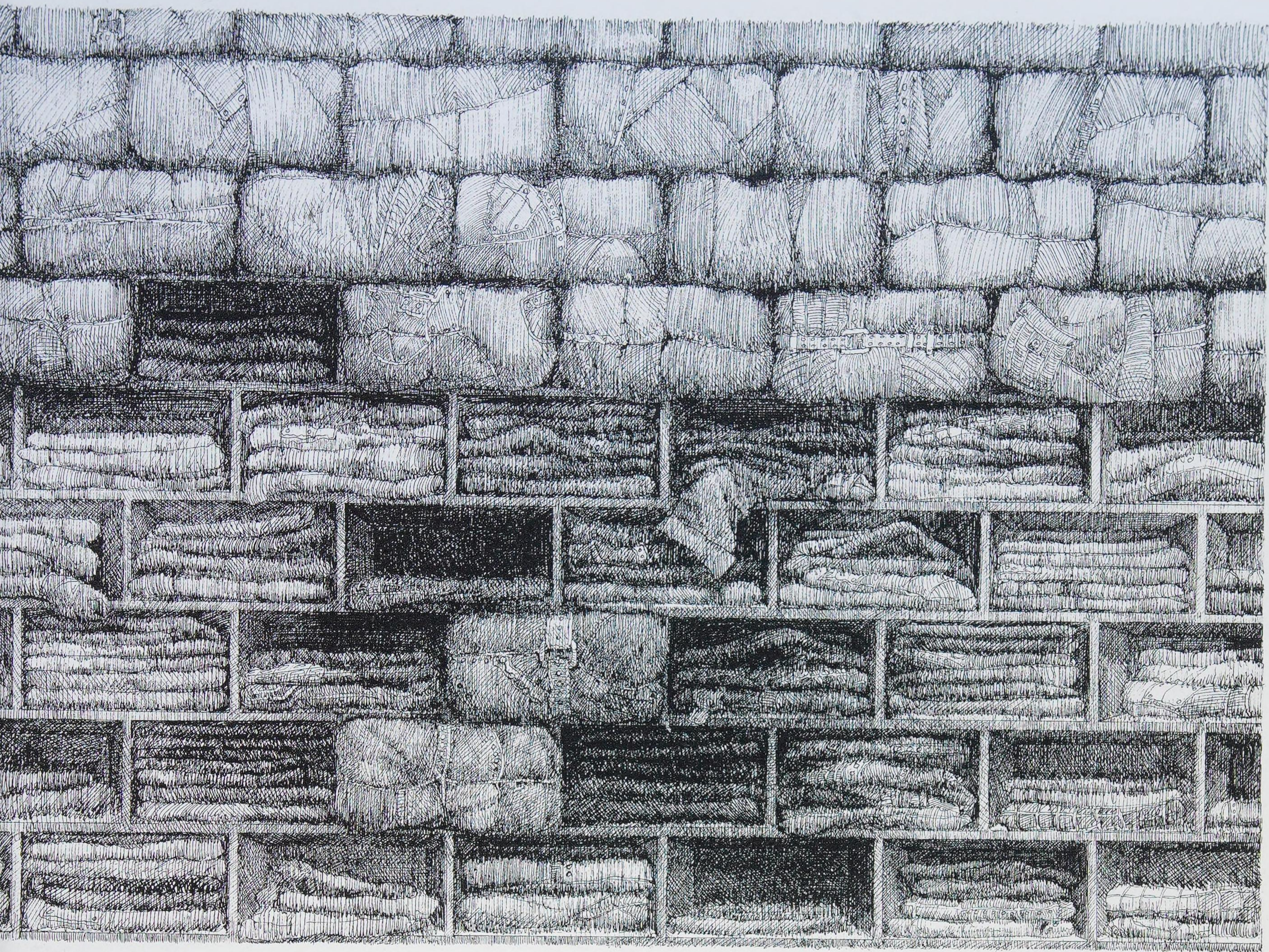
*The General Store, 1980, Washington, D.C.: Section of shopping mall elevation with denim building blocks
Pen and ink on paper, 20" × 24"*



The General Store - Washington, D.C.

SITE 555W-W 1980

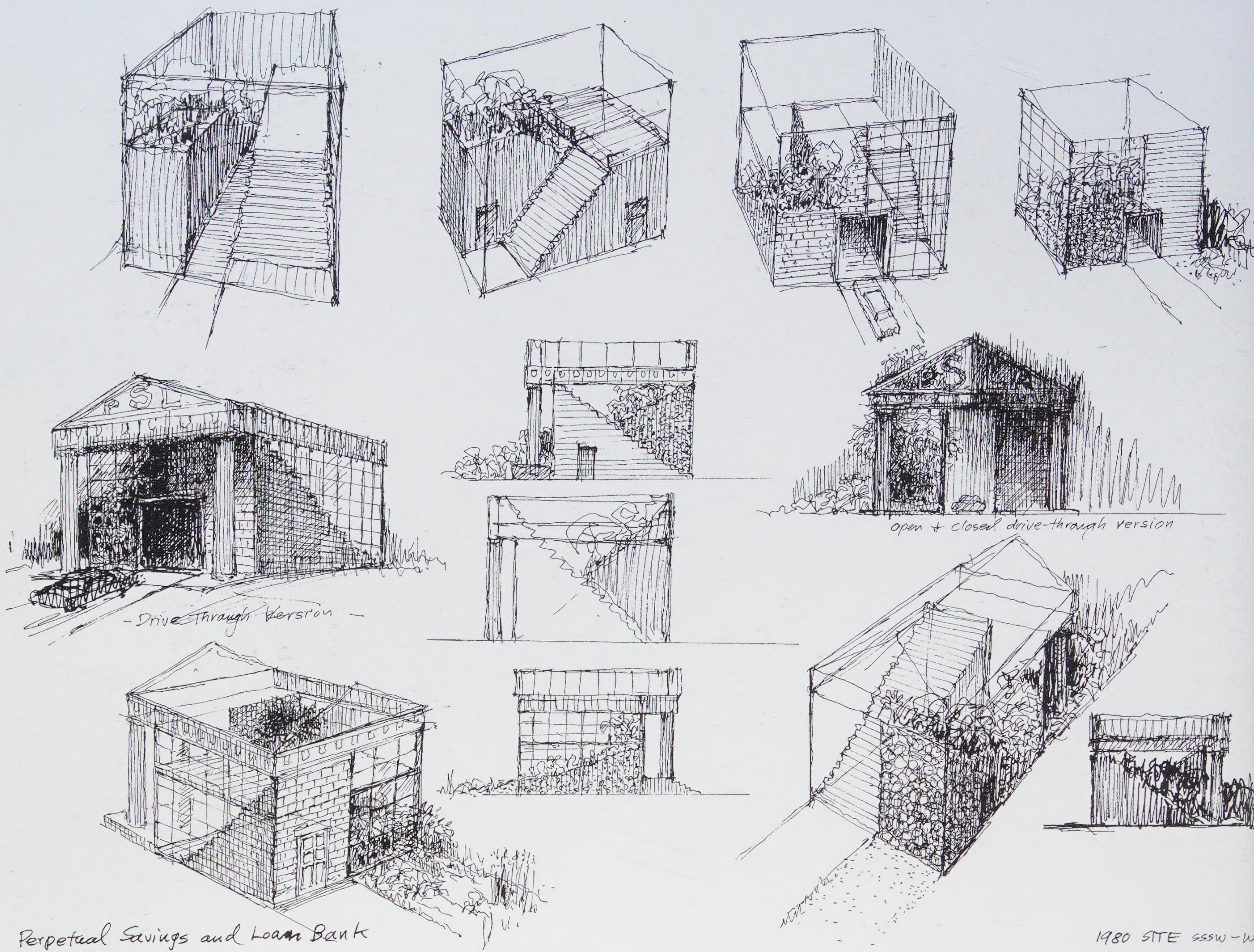
The General Store, 1980, Washington, D.C.: View of clothing store interior with denim building blocks
Pen and ink on paper, 14" x 17"



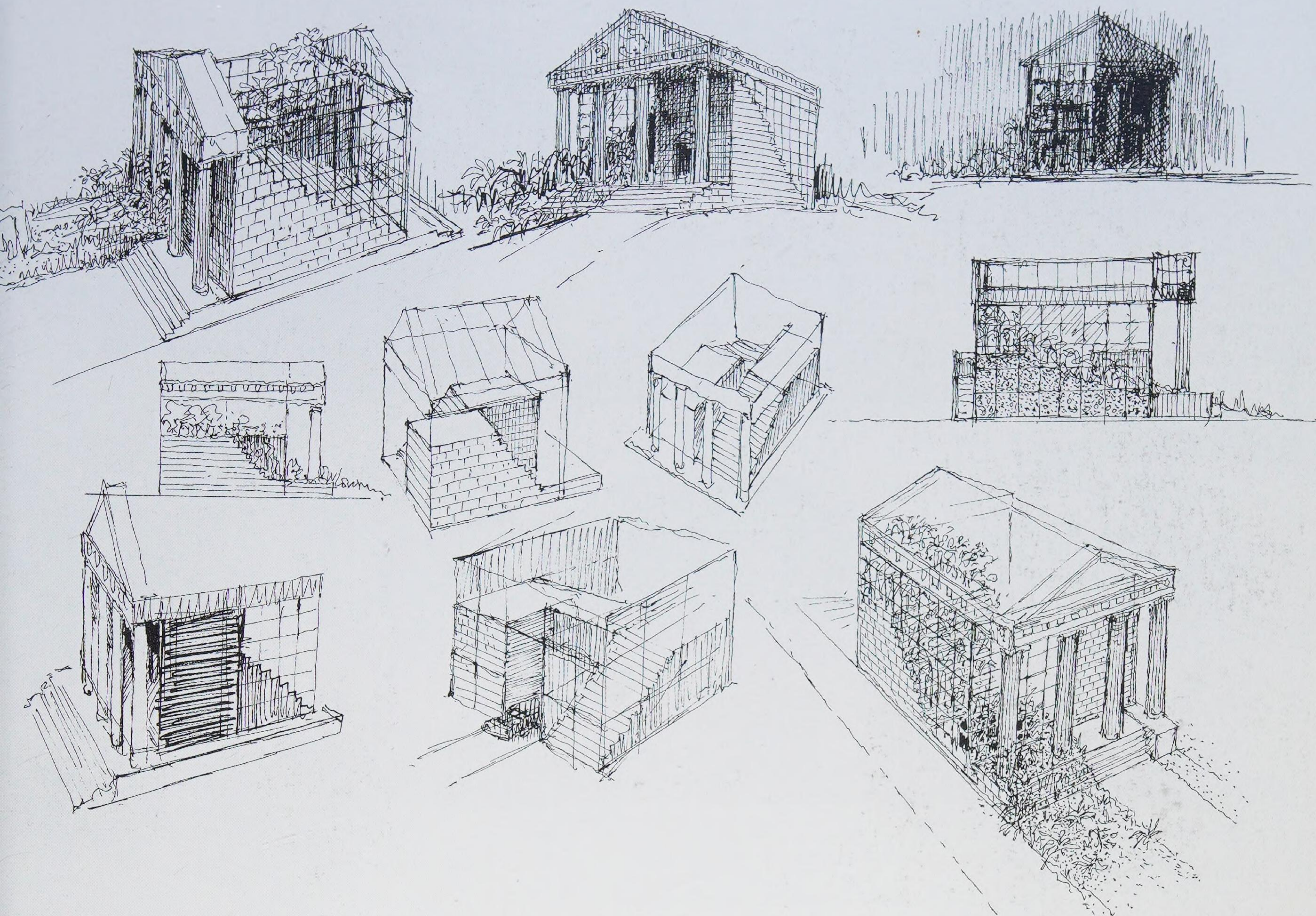
THE GENERAL STORE - WASHINGTON, D.C. WALL SECTION, INTERIOR

SITE SSSW - LV. 1980

*The General Store, 1980, Washington, D.C.: Detail view of denim building blocks with garment shelving
Pen and ink on paper, 23½" × 18¾"*



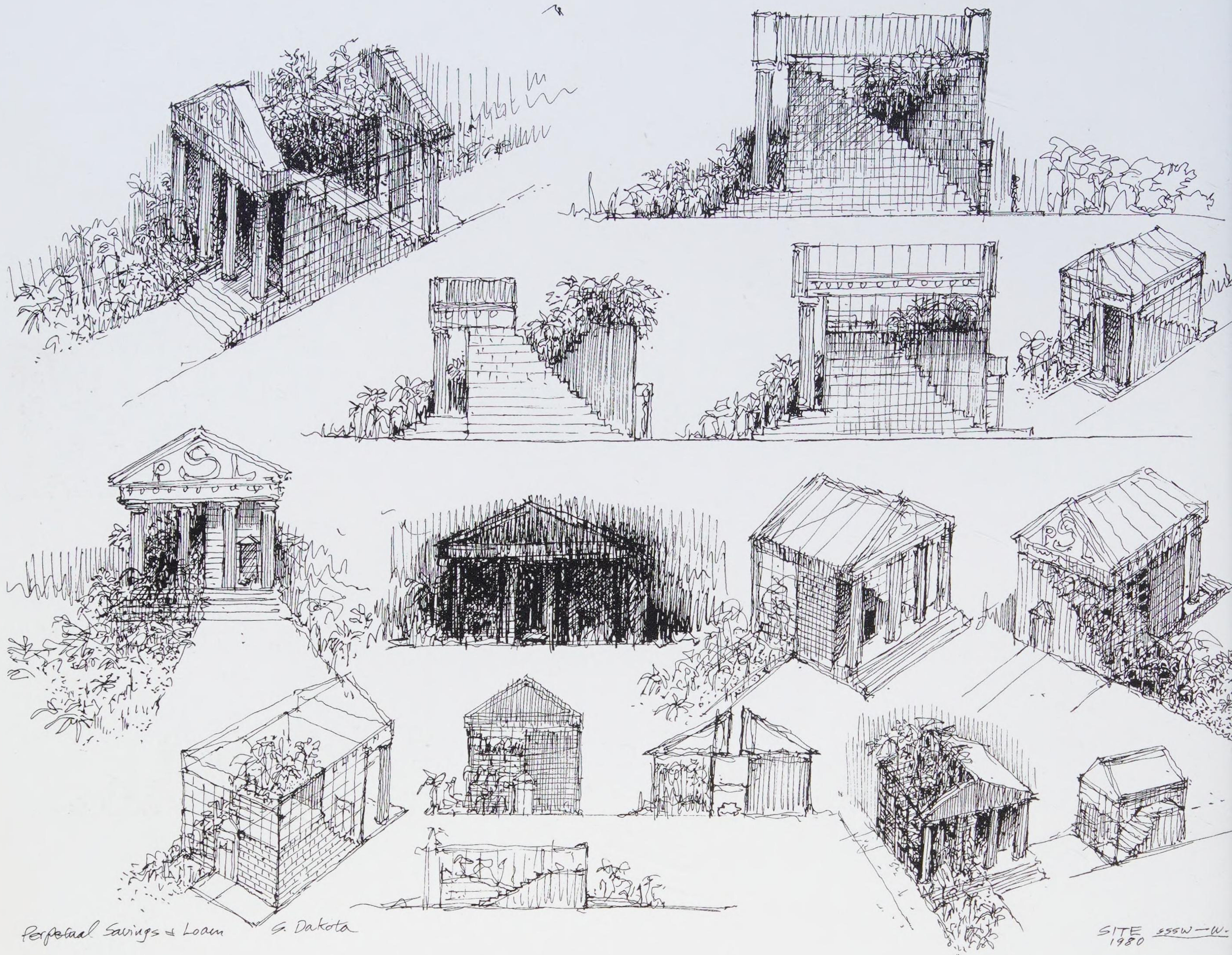
Perpetual Savings and Loan Association Bank, 1980, Various locations in South Dakota:
 Study variations of inside/outside theme
 Pen and ink on paper, 11" x 14"



Perpetual Savings and Loan Bank - S. Dakota

1980 SITE SSSW-W.

*Perpetual Savings and Loan Association Bank, 1980, Various locations in South Dakota:
Study variations of inside/outside theme
Pen and ink on paper, 11" x 14"*



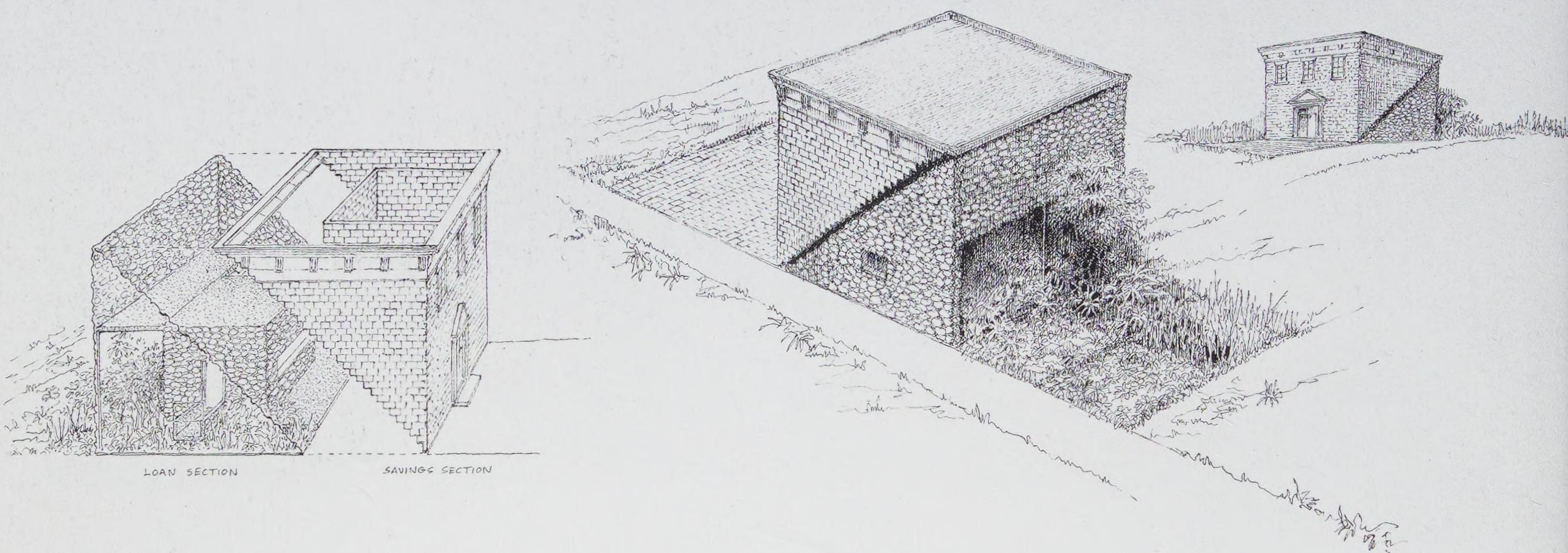
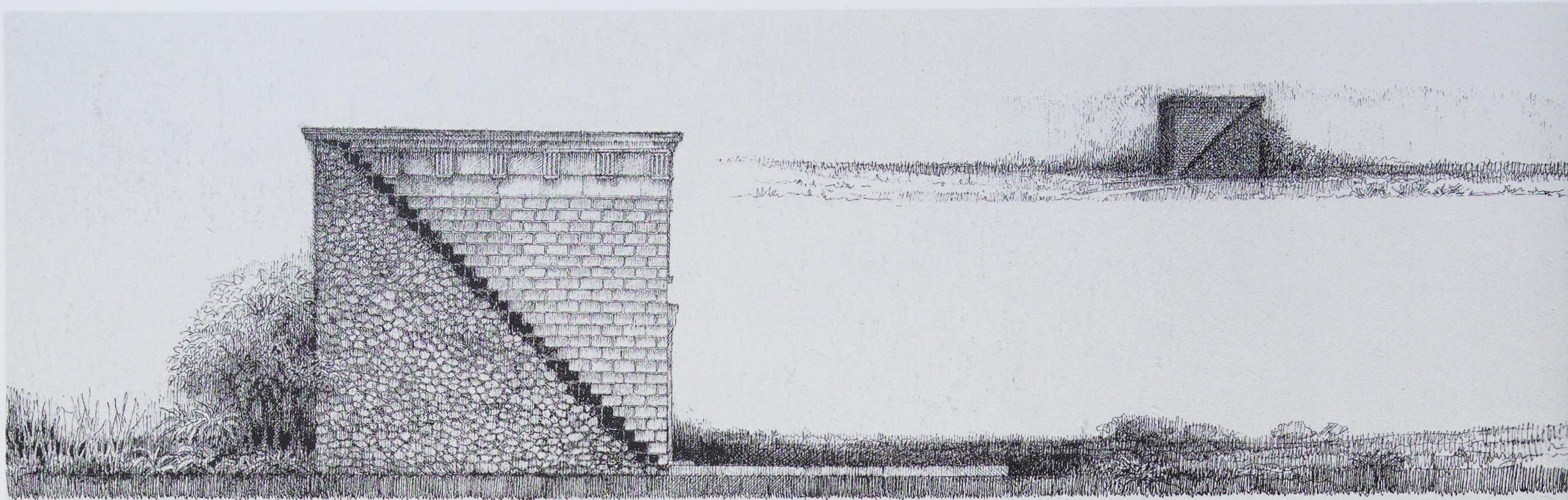
*Perpetual Savings and Loan Association Bank, 1980, Various locations in South Dakota:
Studies of inside/outside theme
Pen and ink on paper, 11" × 14"*



Perpetual Savings and Loan Bank - S. Dakota

1980 SITE SSSW J.W.

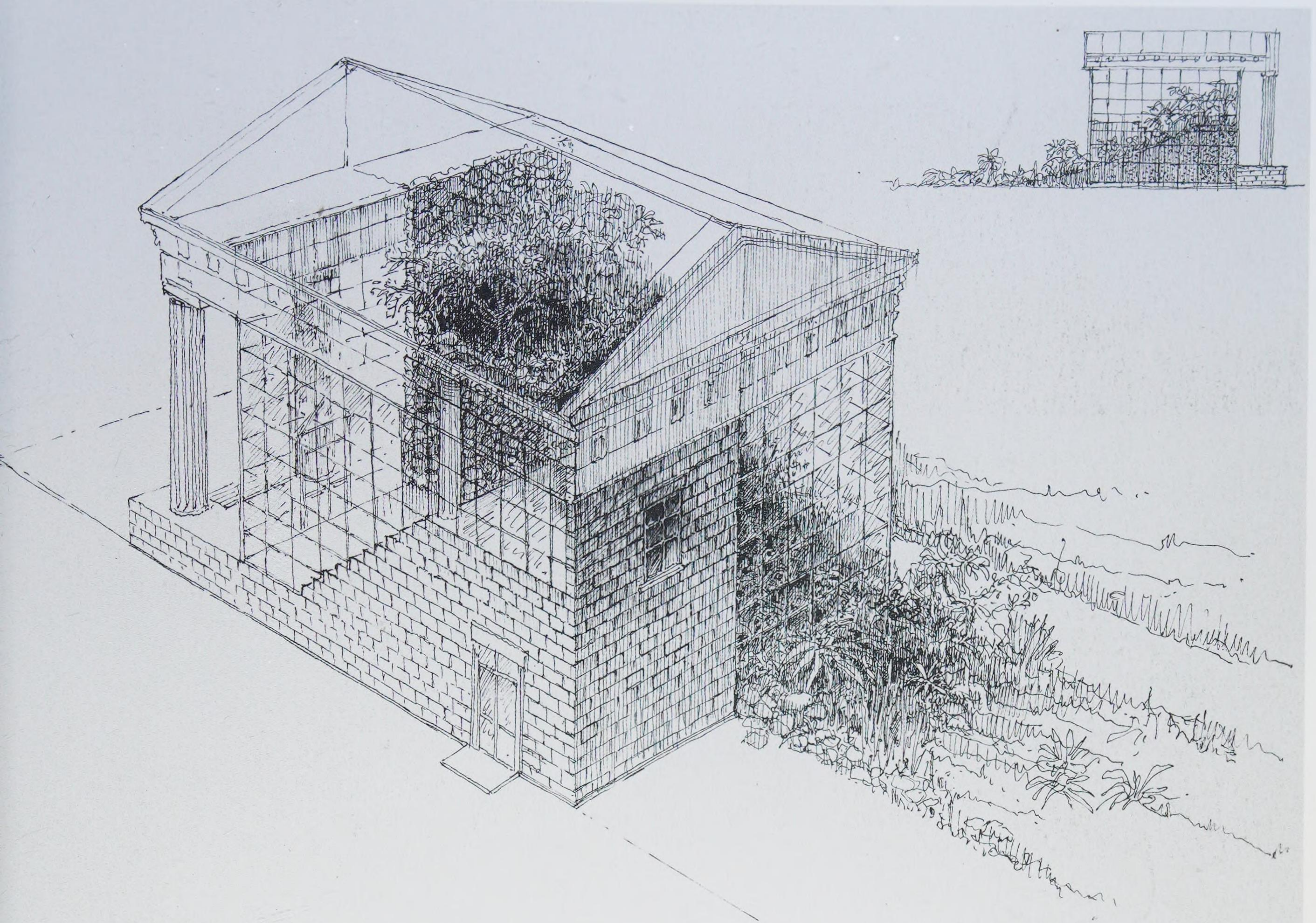
*Perpetual Savings and Loan Association Bank, 1980, Various locations in South Dakota:
Studies of inside/outside theme
Pen and ink on paper, 11" x 14"*



PERPETUAL SAVINGS AND LOAN BANK - SOUTH DAKOTA

SITE SSSW-W. 1980

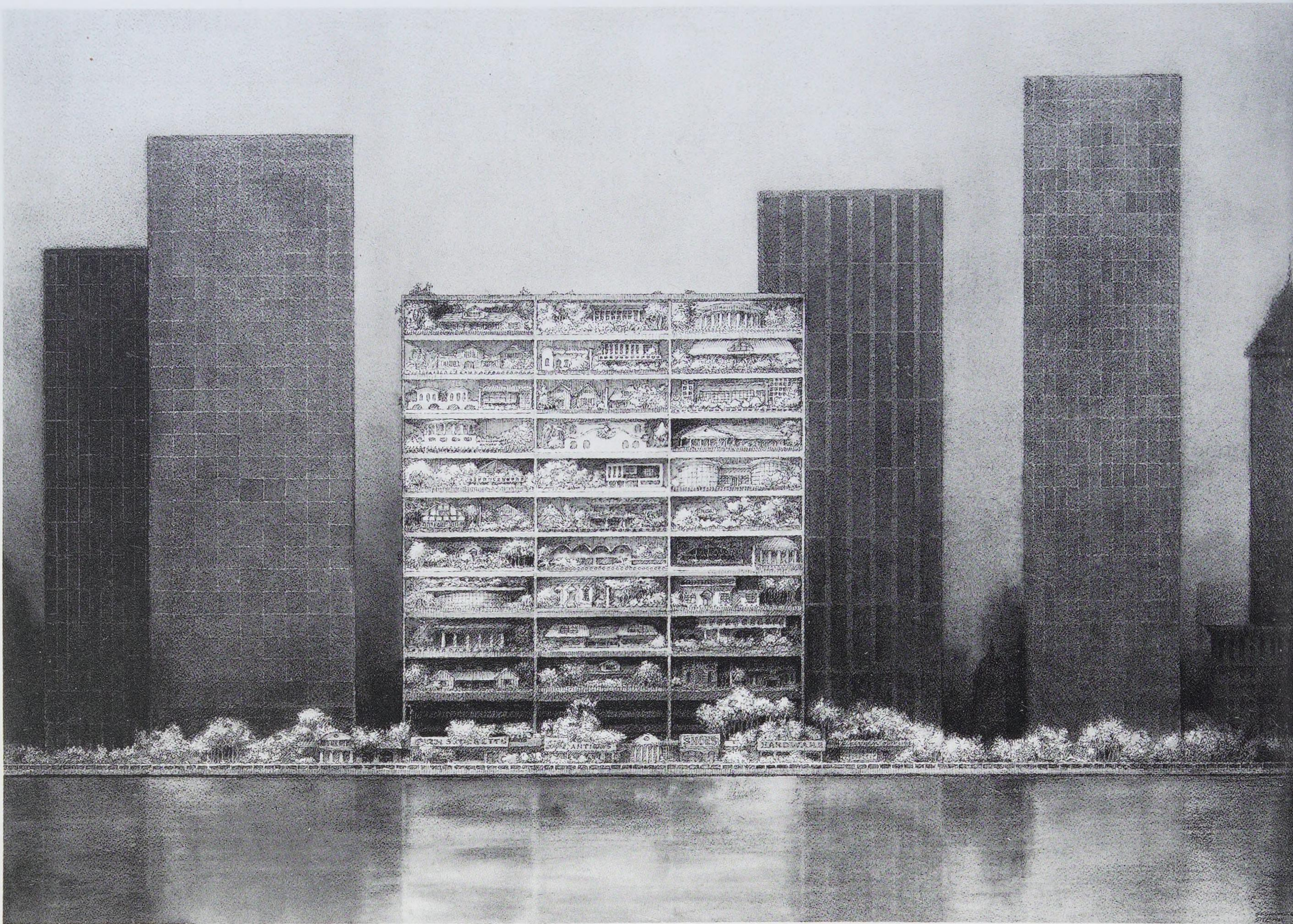
*Perpetual Savings and Loan Association Bank, 1980, Various locations in South Dakota:
General overview of project in landscape
Pen and ink on paper, 19" x 24"*



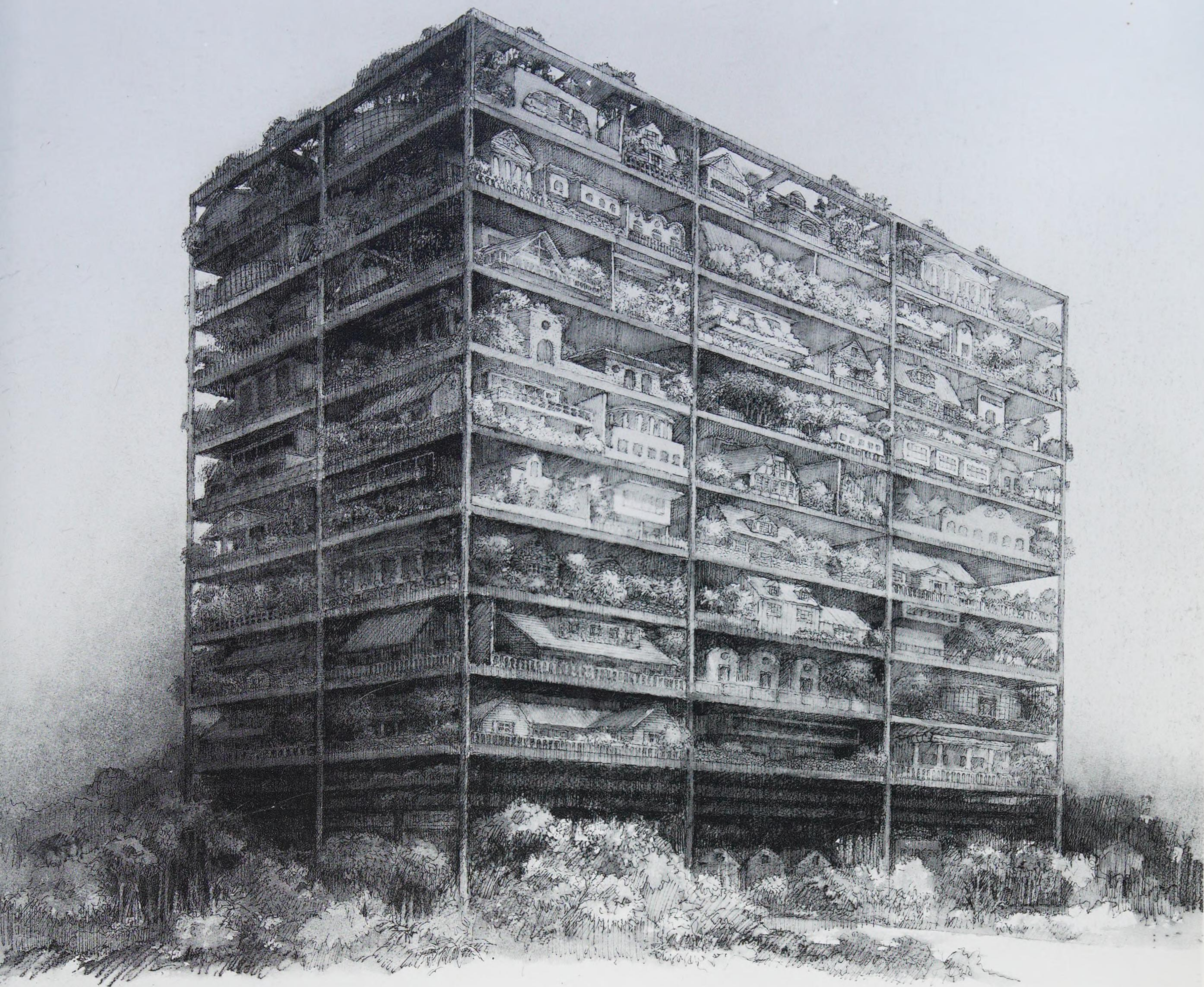
Perpetual Savings and Loan Bank - S. Dakota

1980 SITE SSSW - W.

*Perpetual Savings and Loan Association Bank, 1980, Various locations in South Dakota:
Studies of inside/outside theme
Pen and ink on paper, 11" x 14"*



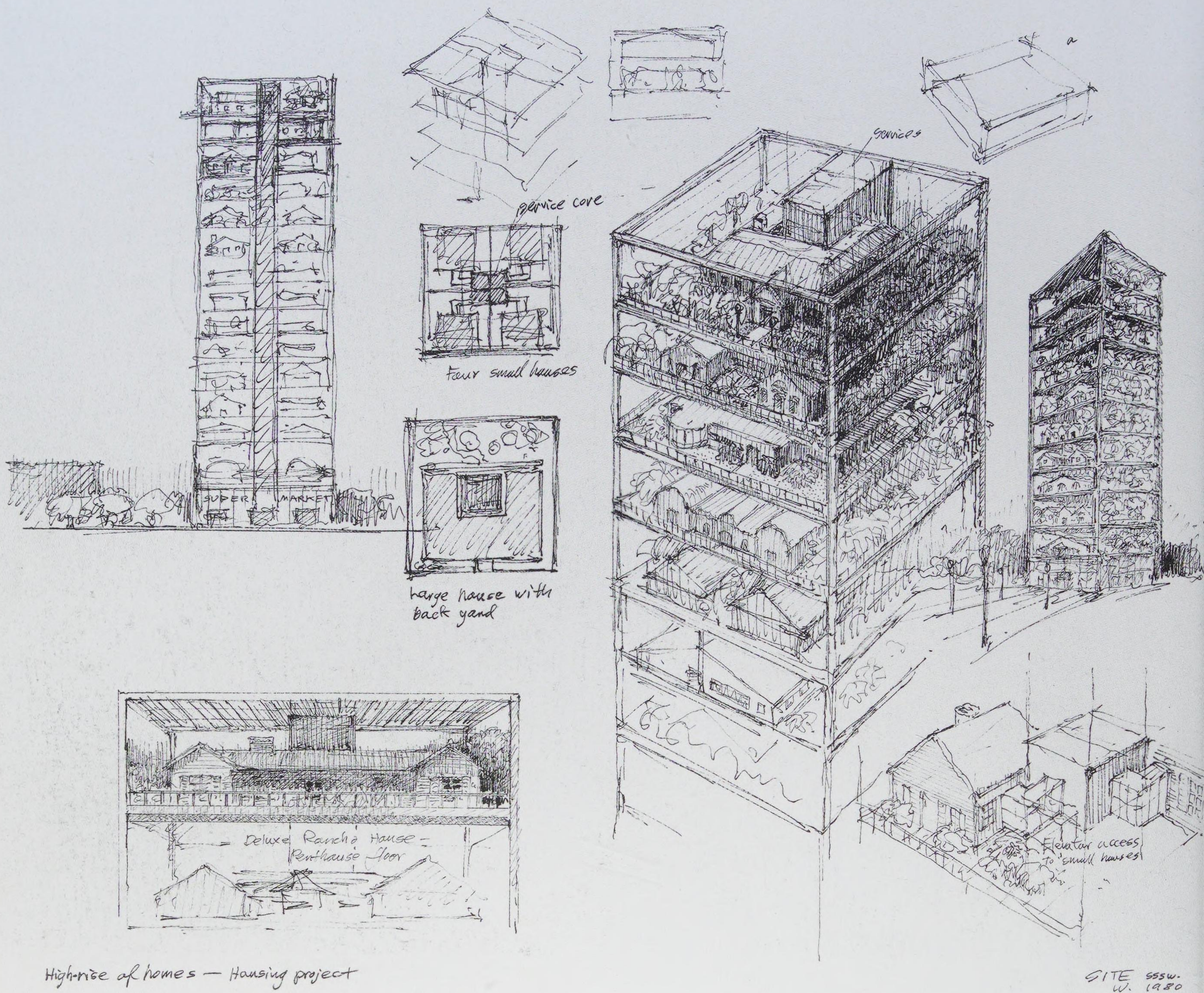
*Highbise of Homes, 1981, Major urban center: Proposed waterfront location
Ink, wash, and charcoal on paper, 22" × 30", collection Laura Carpenter, Dallas, Texas*



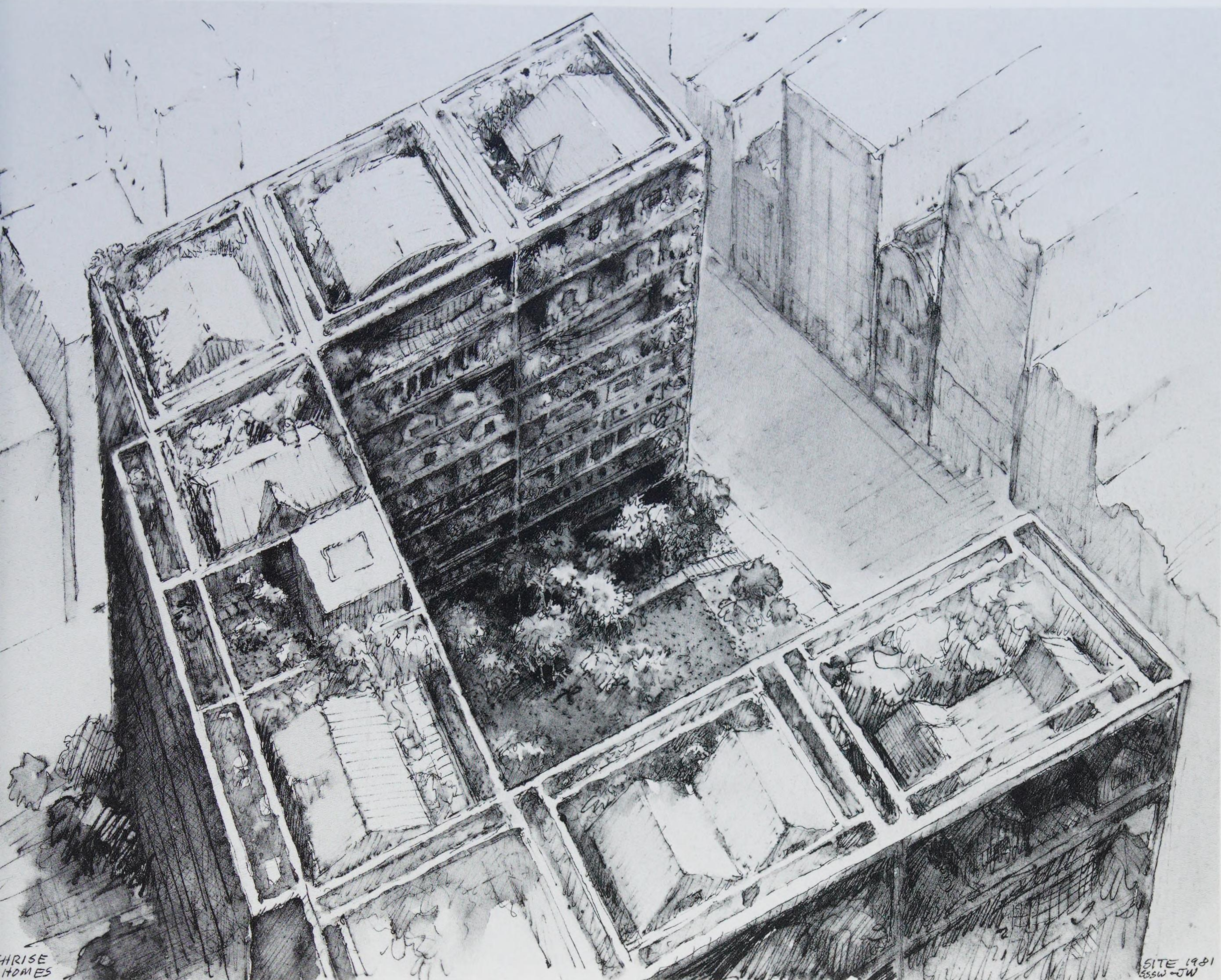
HIGHRISE OF HOMES —

1981 SITE SSSW — W.

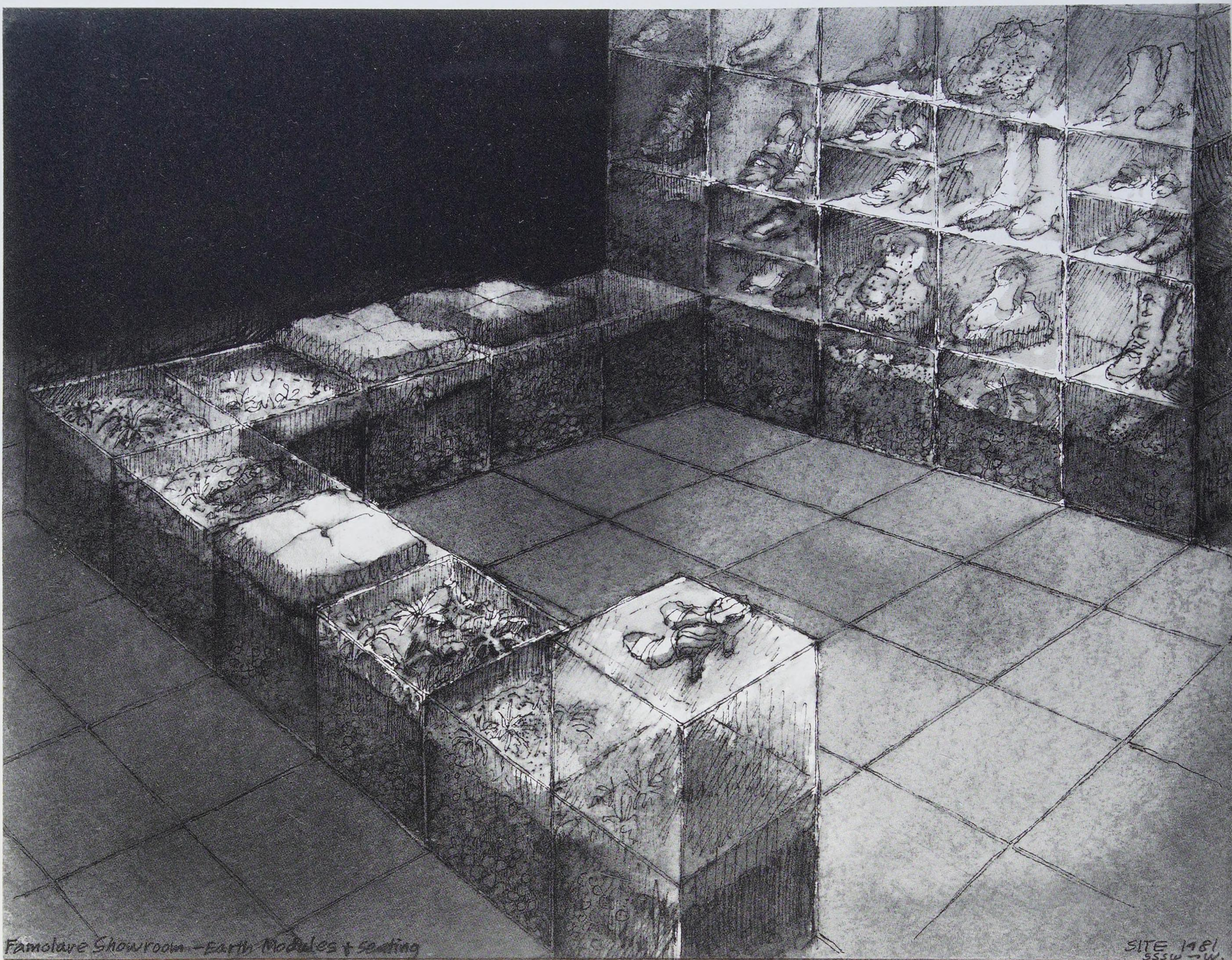
*Highrise of Homes, 1981, Major urban center: General view of concept
Ink, wash, and charcoal on paper, 22" × 24", collection the Museum of Modern Art, New York*



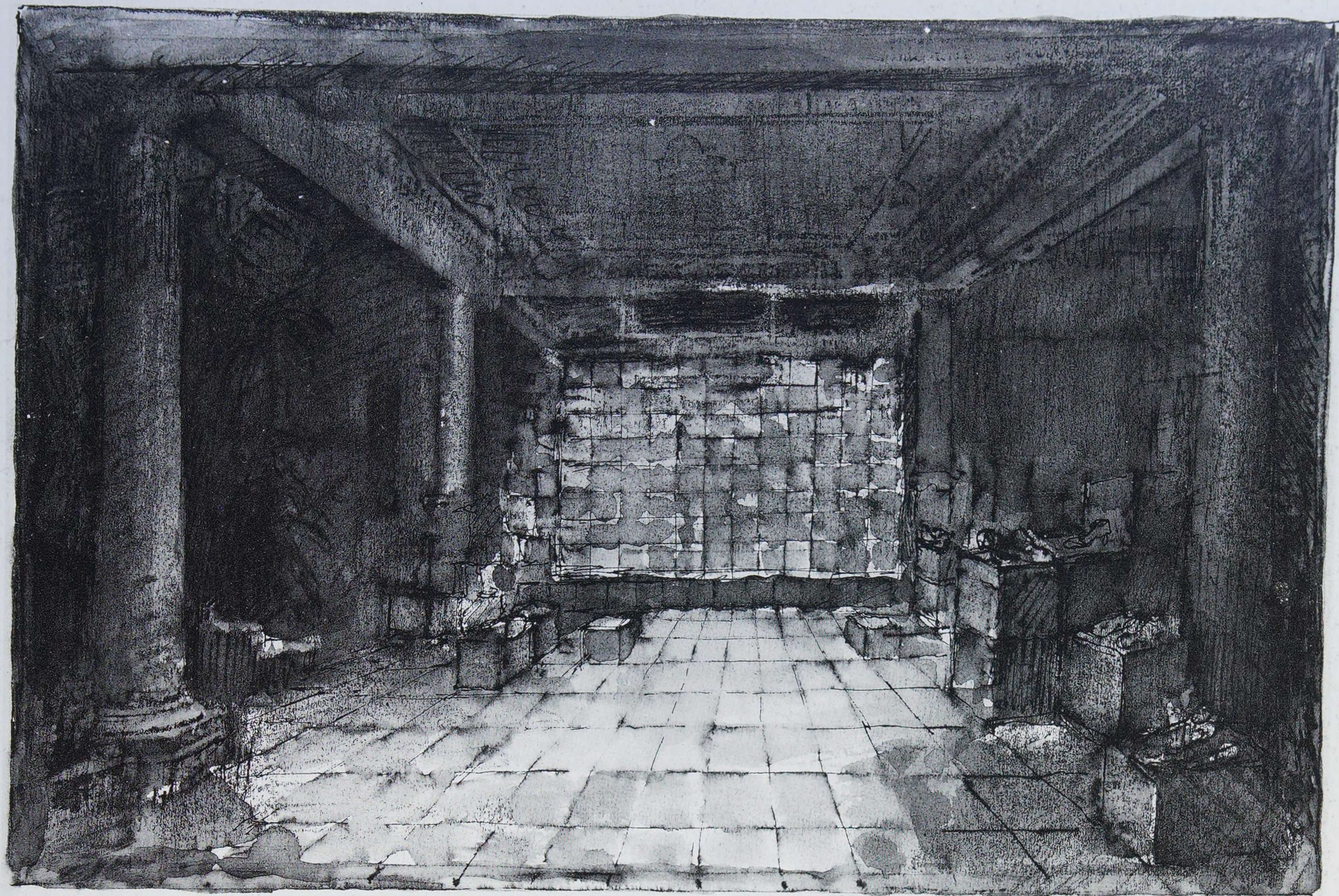
Highrise of Homes, 1980, Major urban center: Initial sketches of concept
Pen and ink on paper, 20" × 23"



*Higrise of Homes, 1981, Major urban center: Aerial view showing atrium garden center
Ink and wash on paper, 11" × 14"*



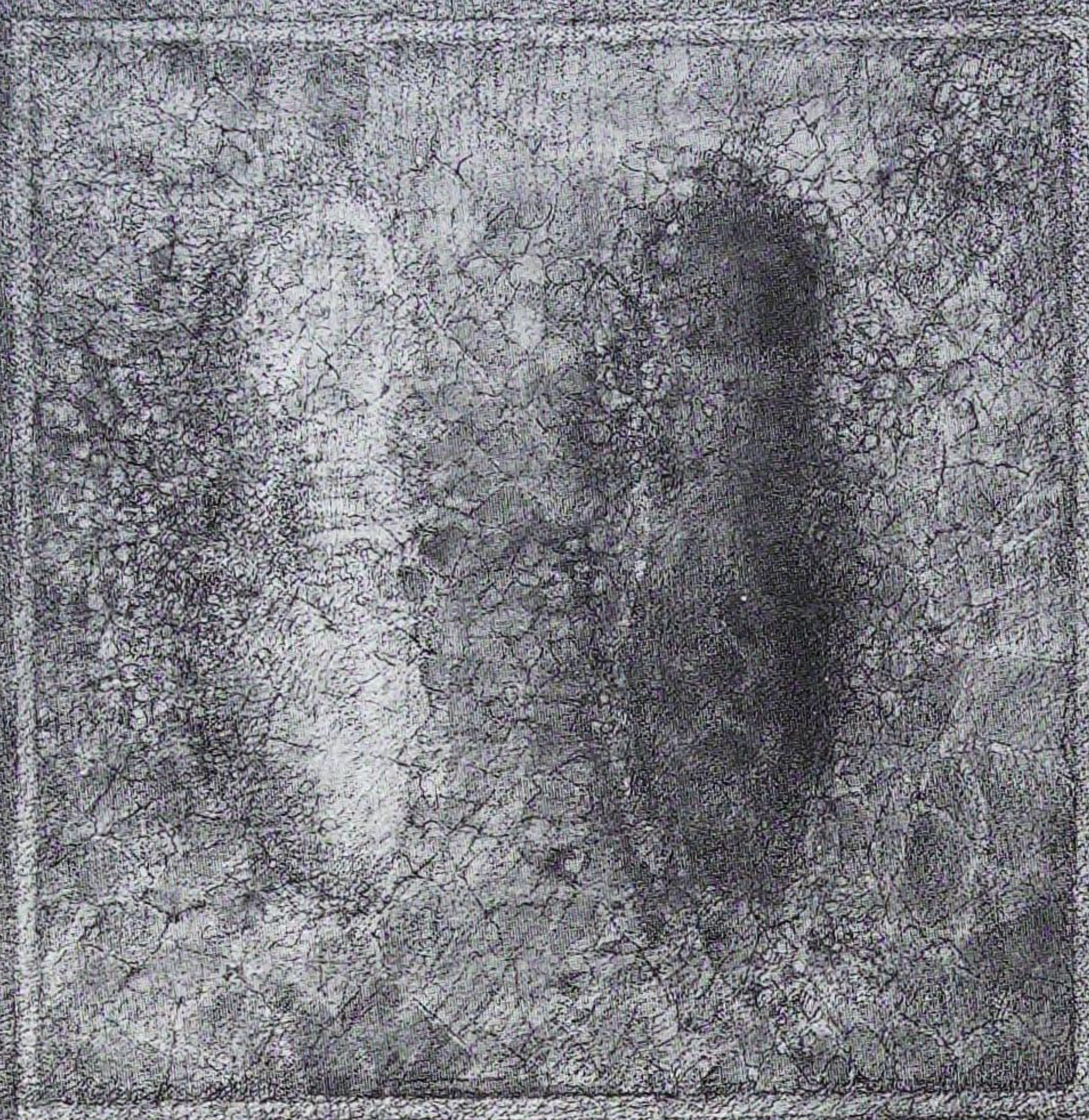
Famolare Shoe Showroom, 1981, New York, New York: Corner of showroom showing terrarium containers for shoes
Ink, wash, and charcoal on paper, 11" × 14"



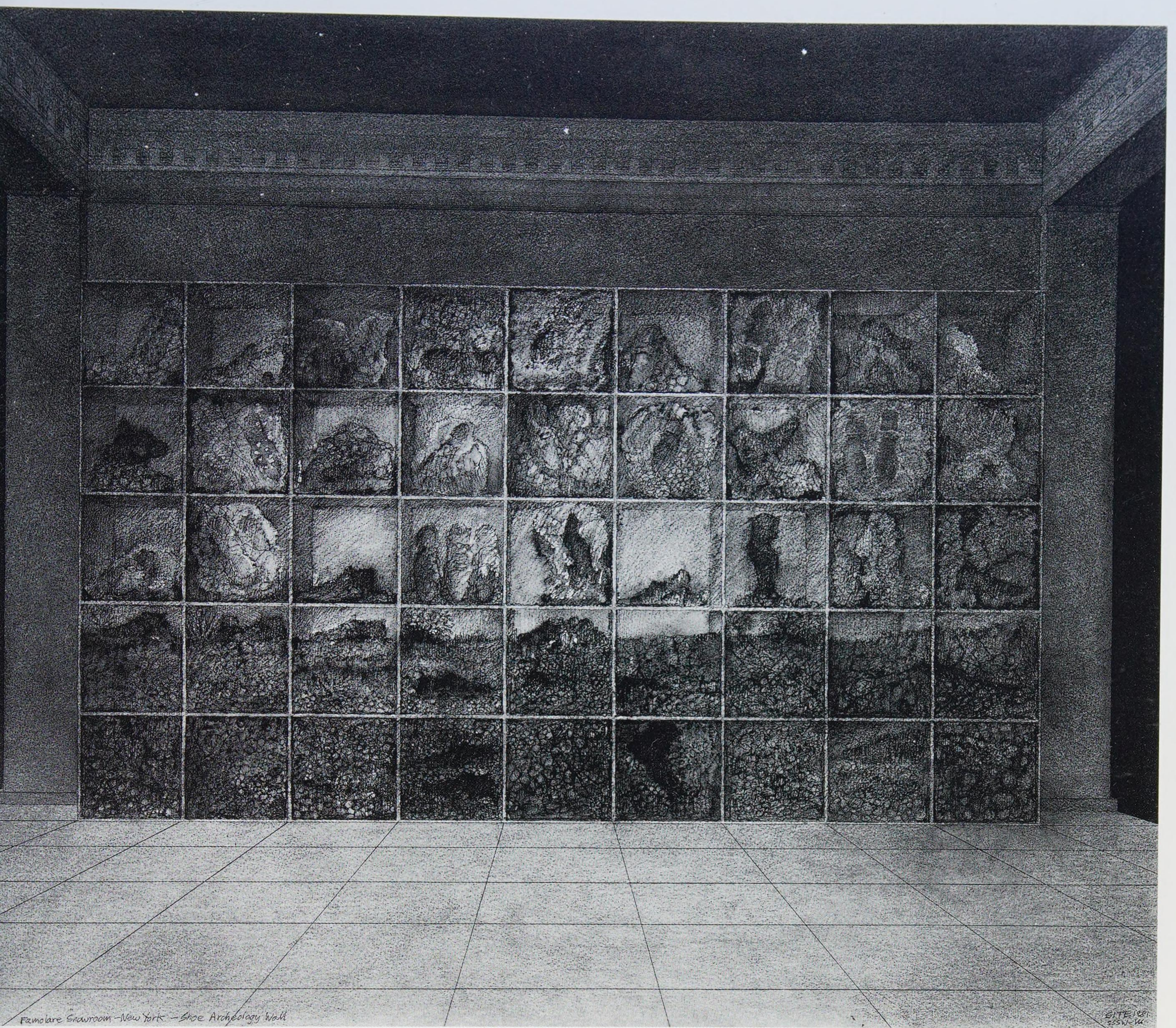
Famolare Showroom

SITE 555W
1981 J.W.

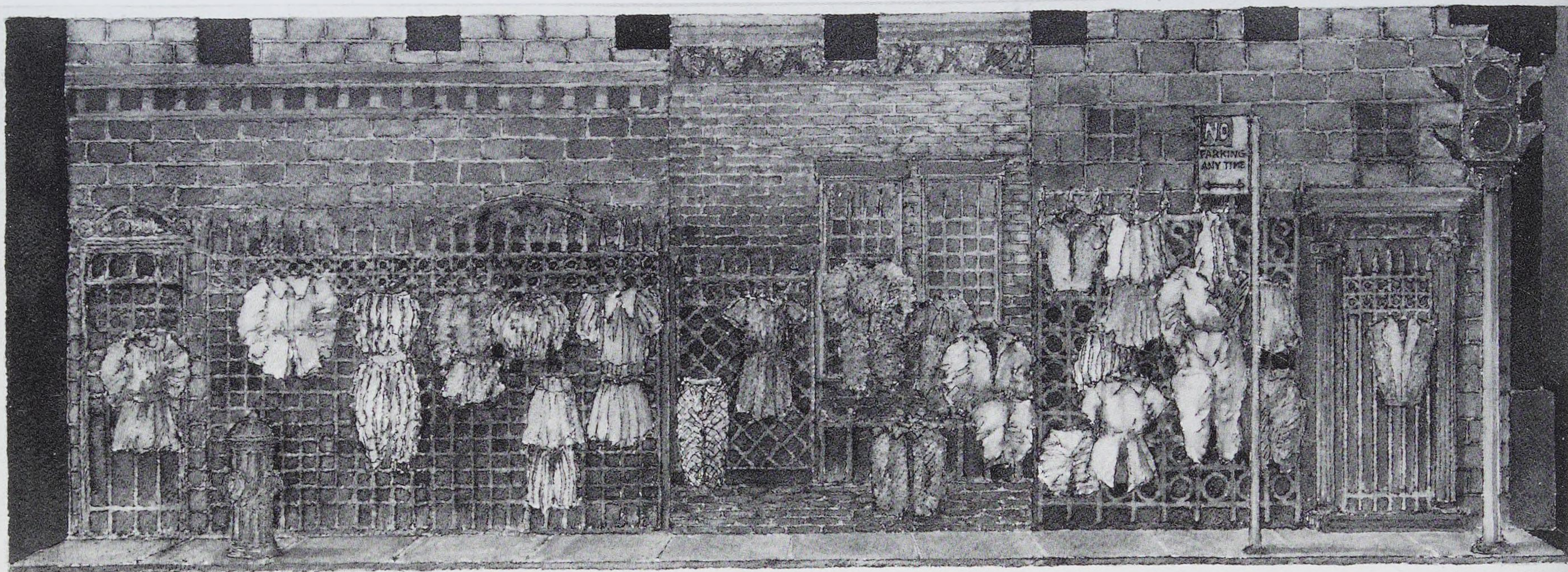
*Famolare Shoe Showroom, 1981, New York, New York: General view of interior showing historic restoration
Ink and wash on paper, 14" × 16"*



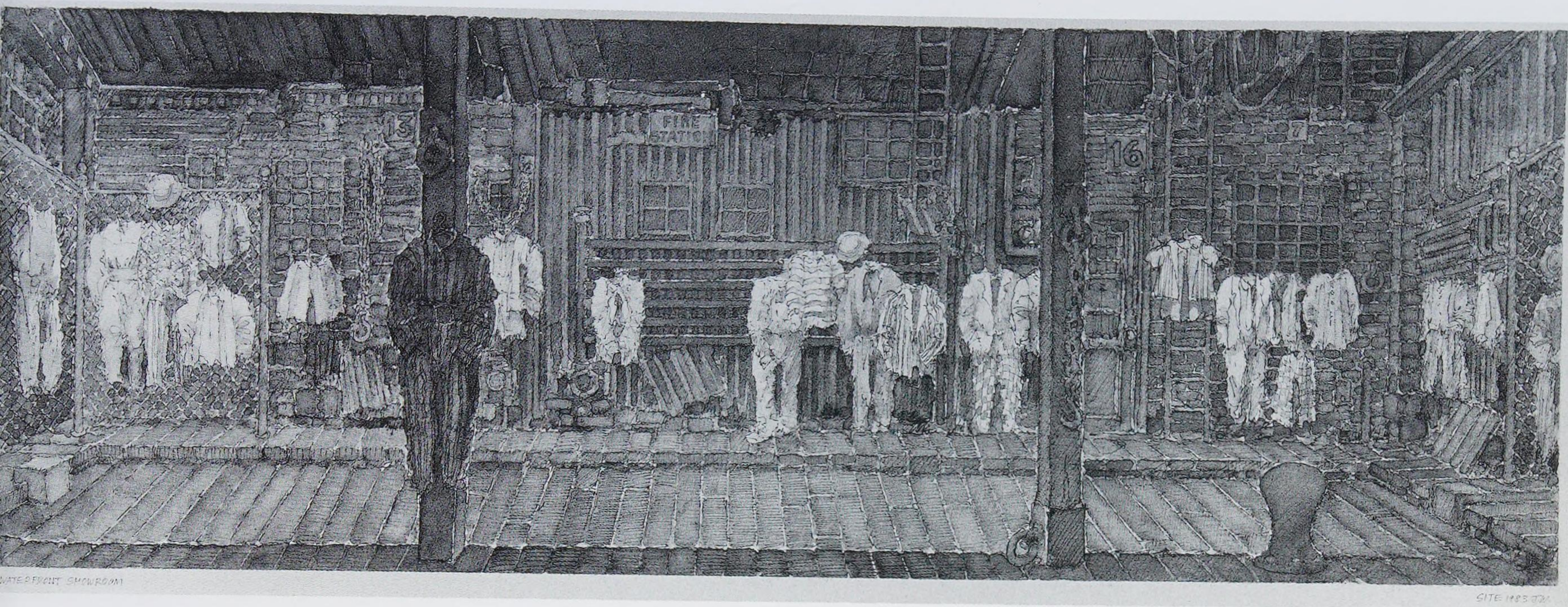
*Famolare Shoe Showroom, 1981, New York, New York: Archaeological shoe display unit
Ink, wash, and charcoal on paper, 17" × 30"*



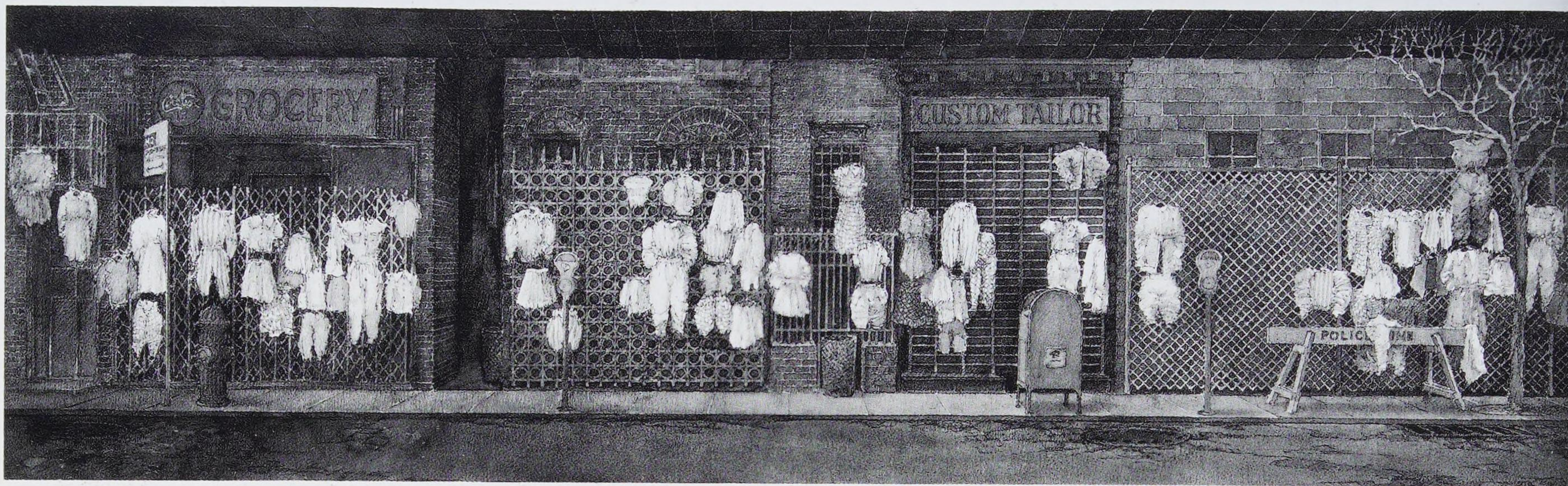
*Famolare Shoe Showroom, 1981, New York, New York: Terrarium wall with shoe archaeology
Ink, wash, and charcoal on paper, 22" × 26", collection Claude Bernard, Paris, France*



*WilliWear Women's Showroom, 1982, New York, New York: General view of street collage wall with garments
Ink and watercolor on paper, 10" × 17", collection Laurie Mallet, New York*



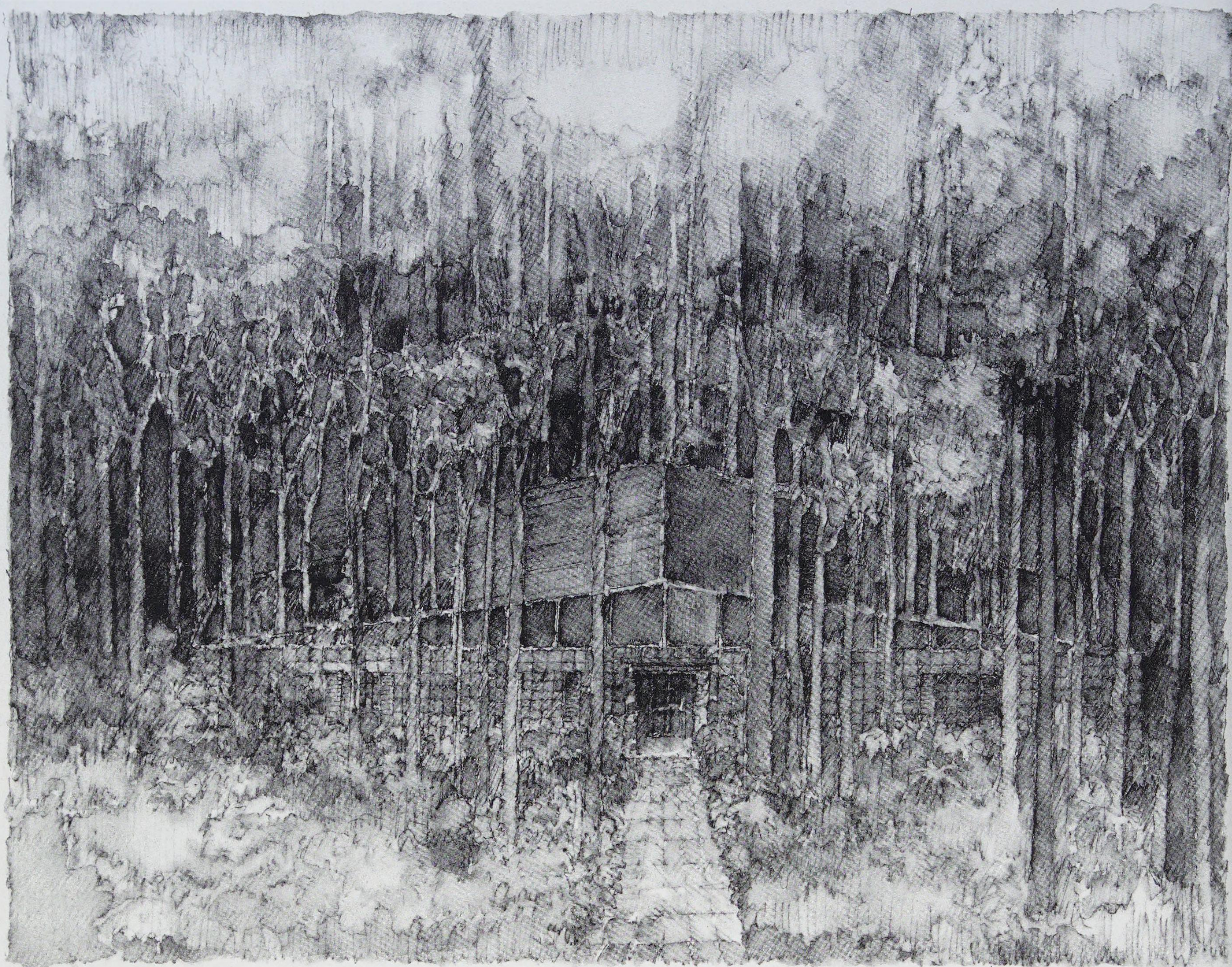
*WilliWear Men's Showroom, 1983, New York, New York: General view of waterfront collage with garments
Ink and wash on paper, 10¼" × 27½"*



*WilliWear Women's Showroom, 1980, New York, New York: General view of street collage with garments
Ink, wash, and charcoal on paper, 16" × 44", collection Claude Bernard, Paris, France*



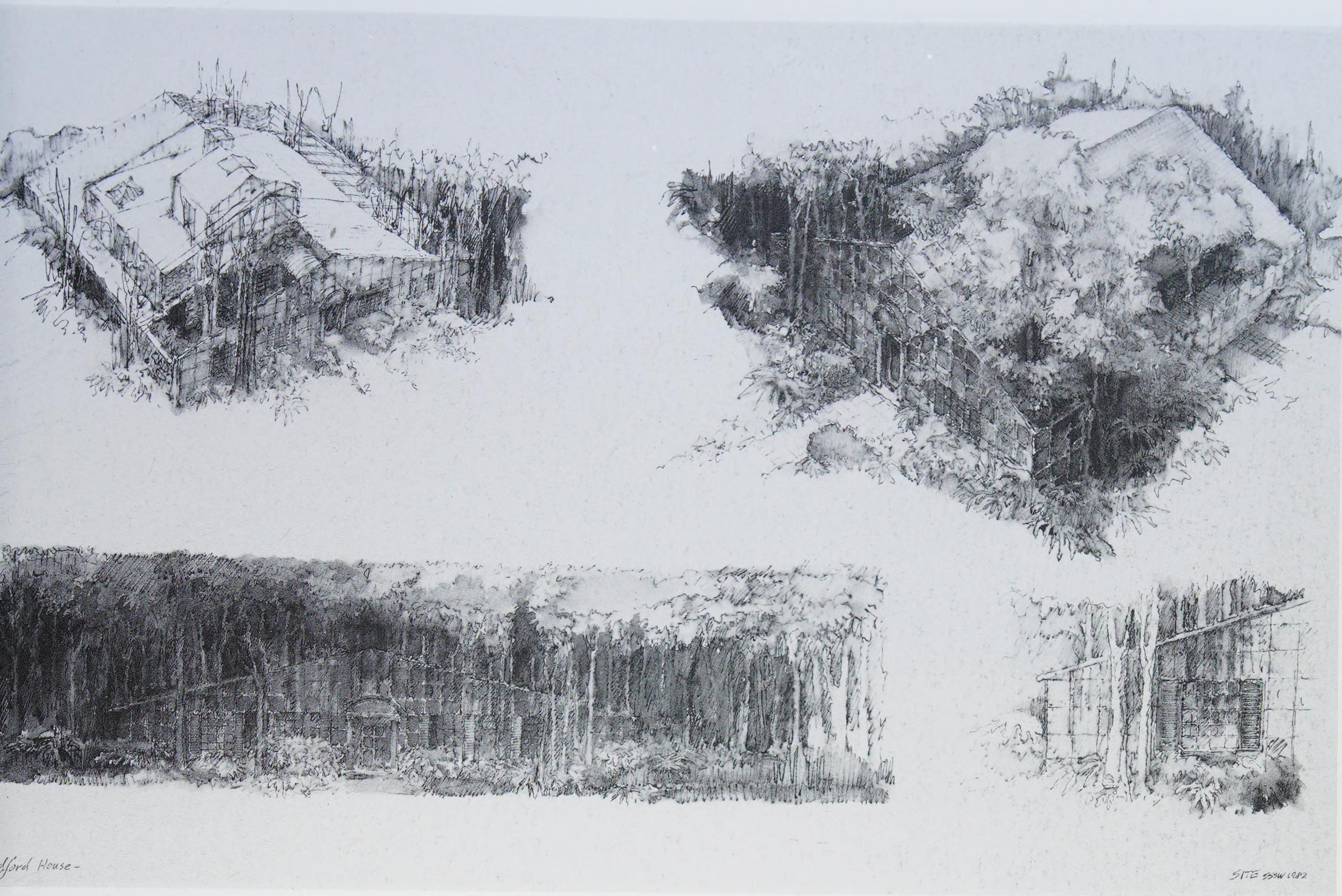
WilliWear Women's Showroom, 1980, New York, New York: Studies for garment showroom
Ink and wash on paper, 16" × 20"



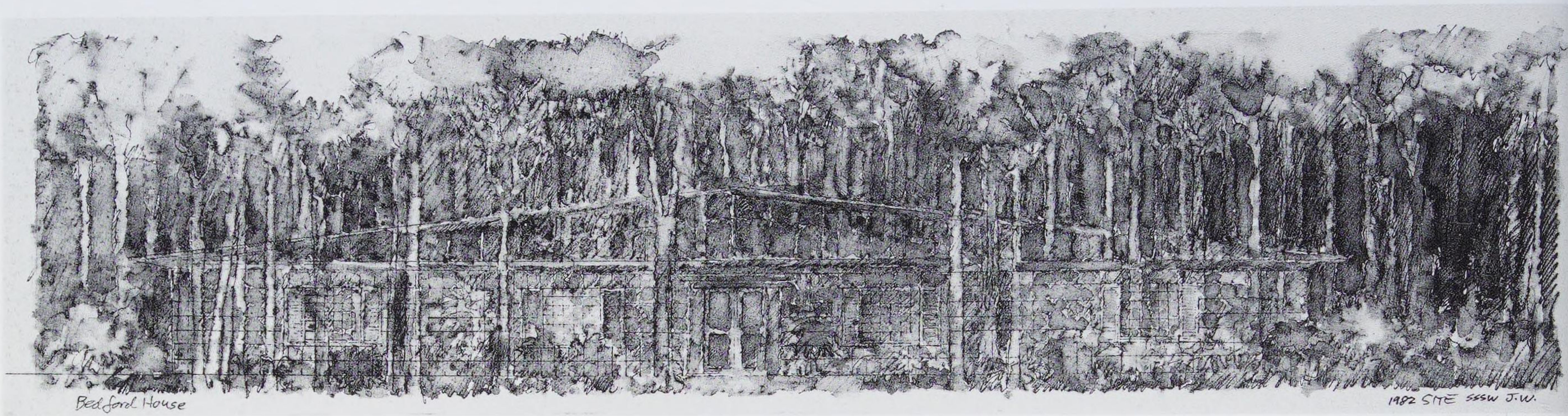
Bedford House

1982 SITE SSSW J.W.

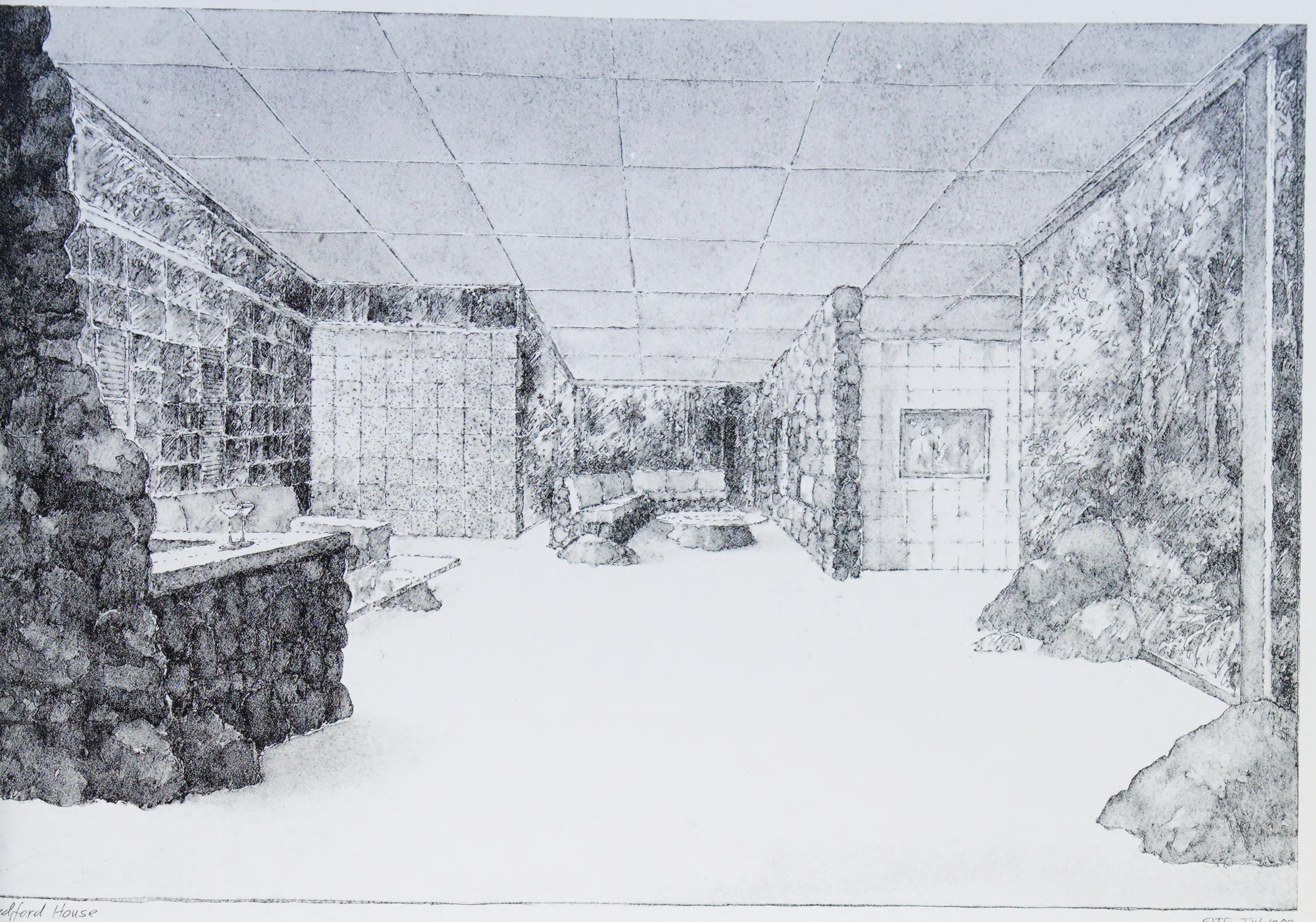
*Bedford House, 1982, Bedford, New York: Facade view showing integration of house and forest
Ink and wash on paper, 11" × 14"*



*Bedford House, 1982, Bedford, New York: Studies of house with various forest penetrations
Ink and wash on paper, 13½" × 22¼", private collection*



*Bedford House, 1982, Bedford, New York: Facade view showing integration of forest
Ink and wash on paper, 3³/₄" × 14¹/₂"*

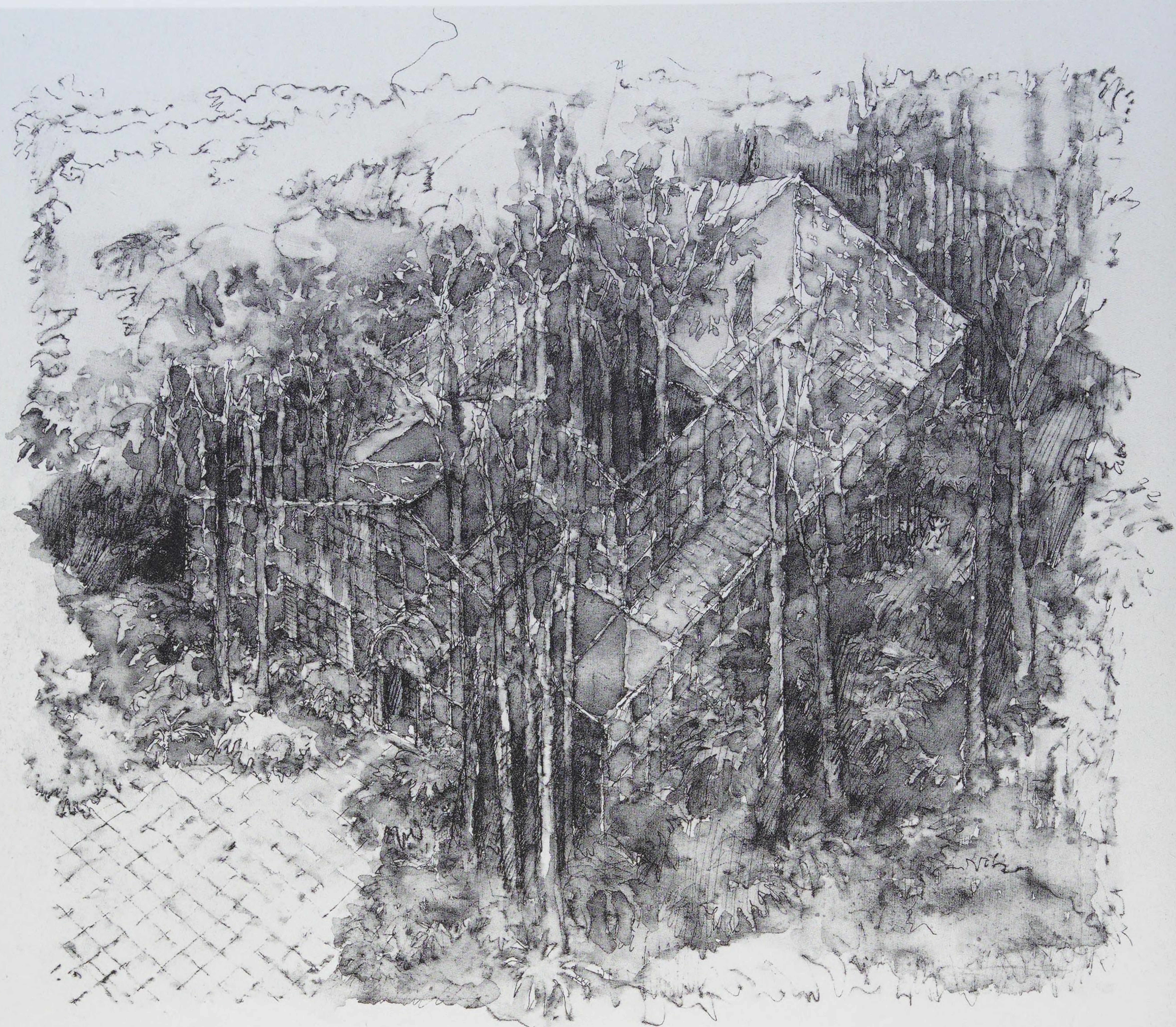


Bedford House

SITE J.W. 1983

Bedford House, 1983, Bedford, New York: Interior view showing atrium and existing boulders used as furniture

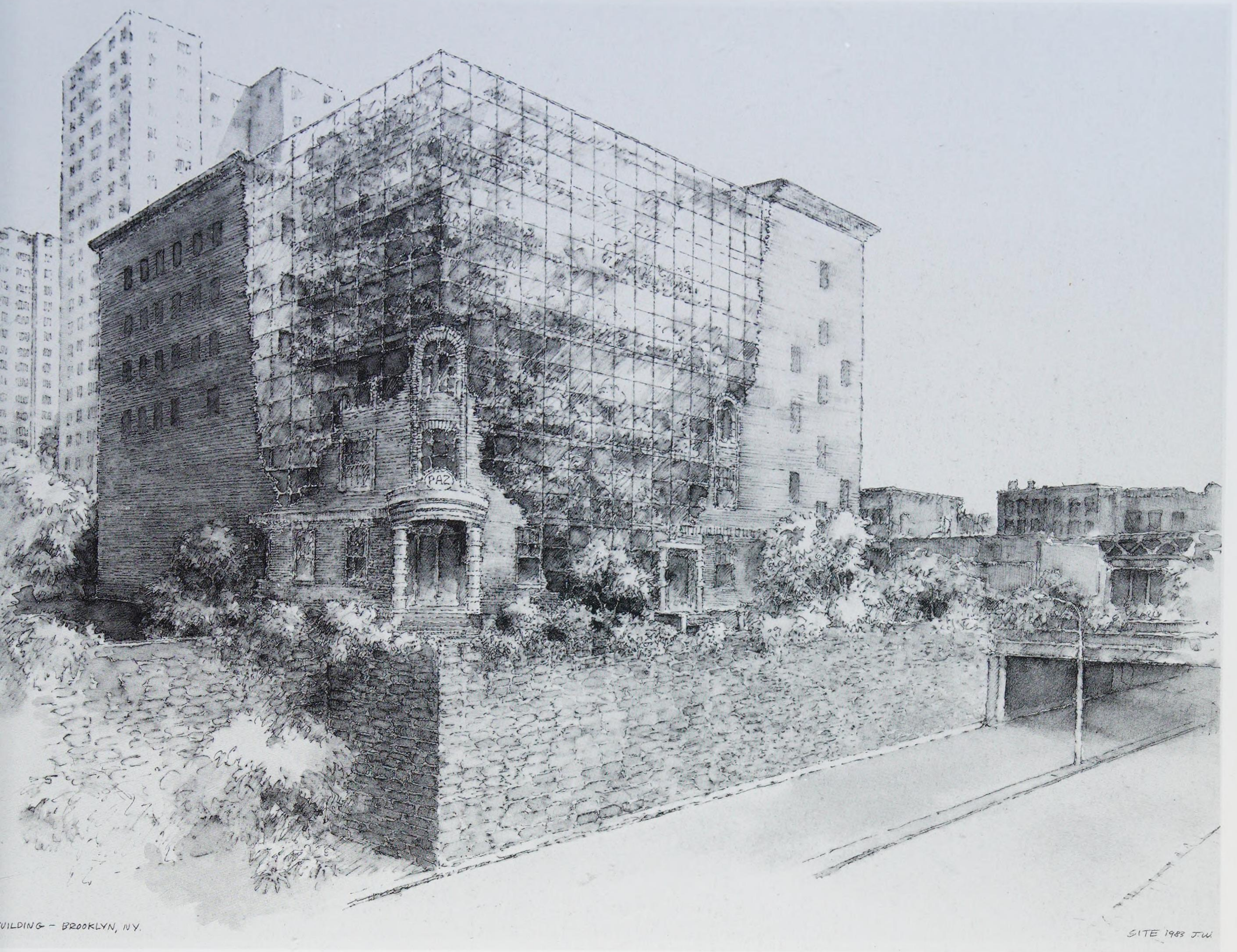
Ink and wash on paper, 12¹/₄" × 17³/₄"



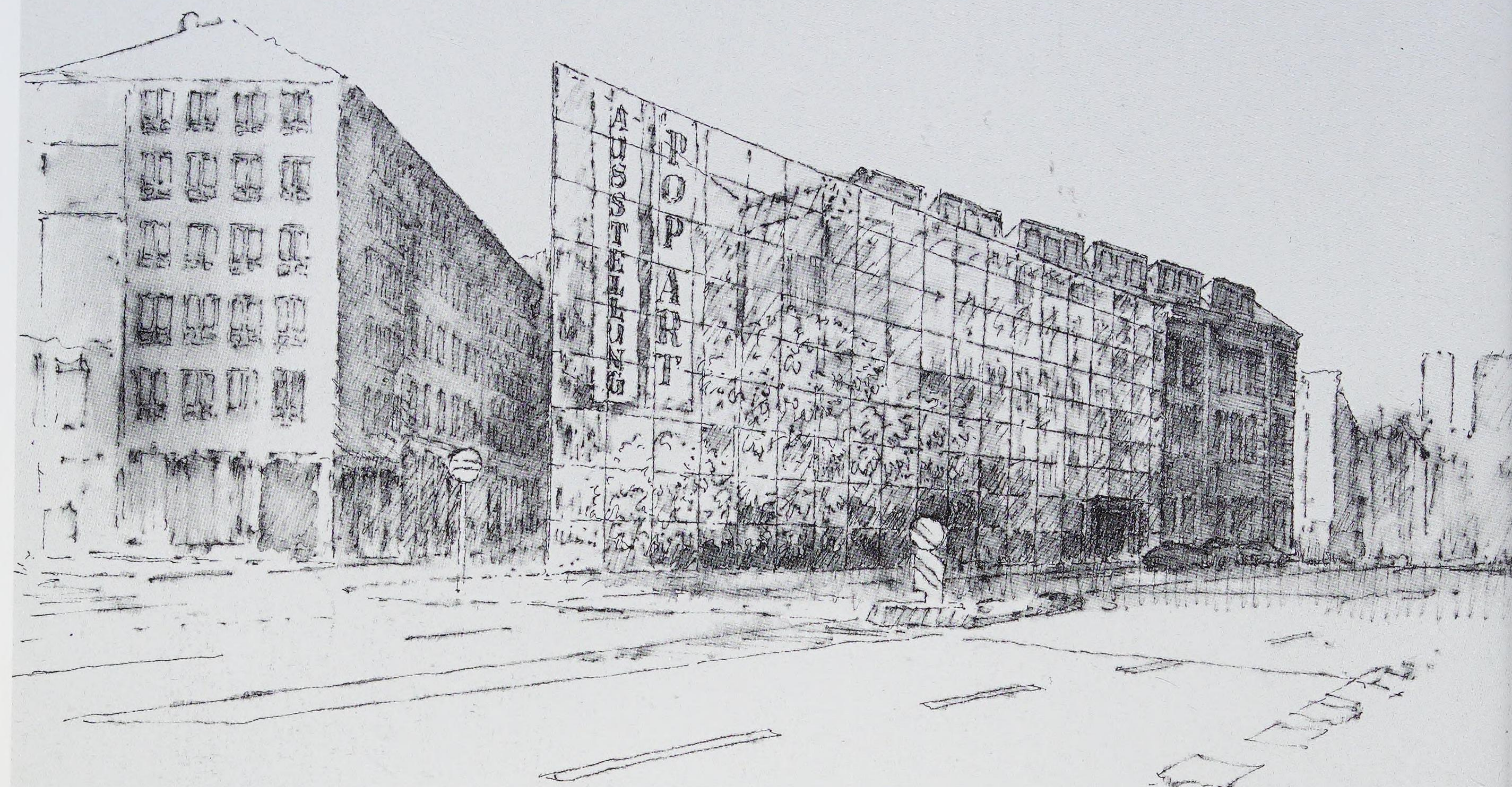
Project for an Invisible House

*SITE 555W
1982 SW.*

*Bedford House, 1982, Bedford, New York: Study of house showing integration of forest
Ink and wash on paper, 11½" × 14"*



*Paz Building, 1983, Brooklyn, New York: General view of project from Brooklyn-Queens Expressway
Ink and wash on paper, 16³/₄" × 22¹/₄"*



Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art - View Southwest
Sculpture Garden area

1982 SITE SSSW

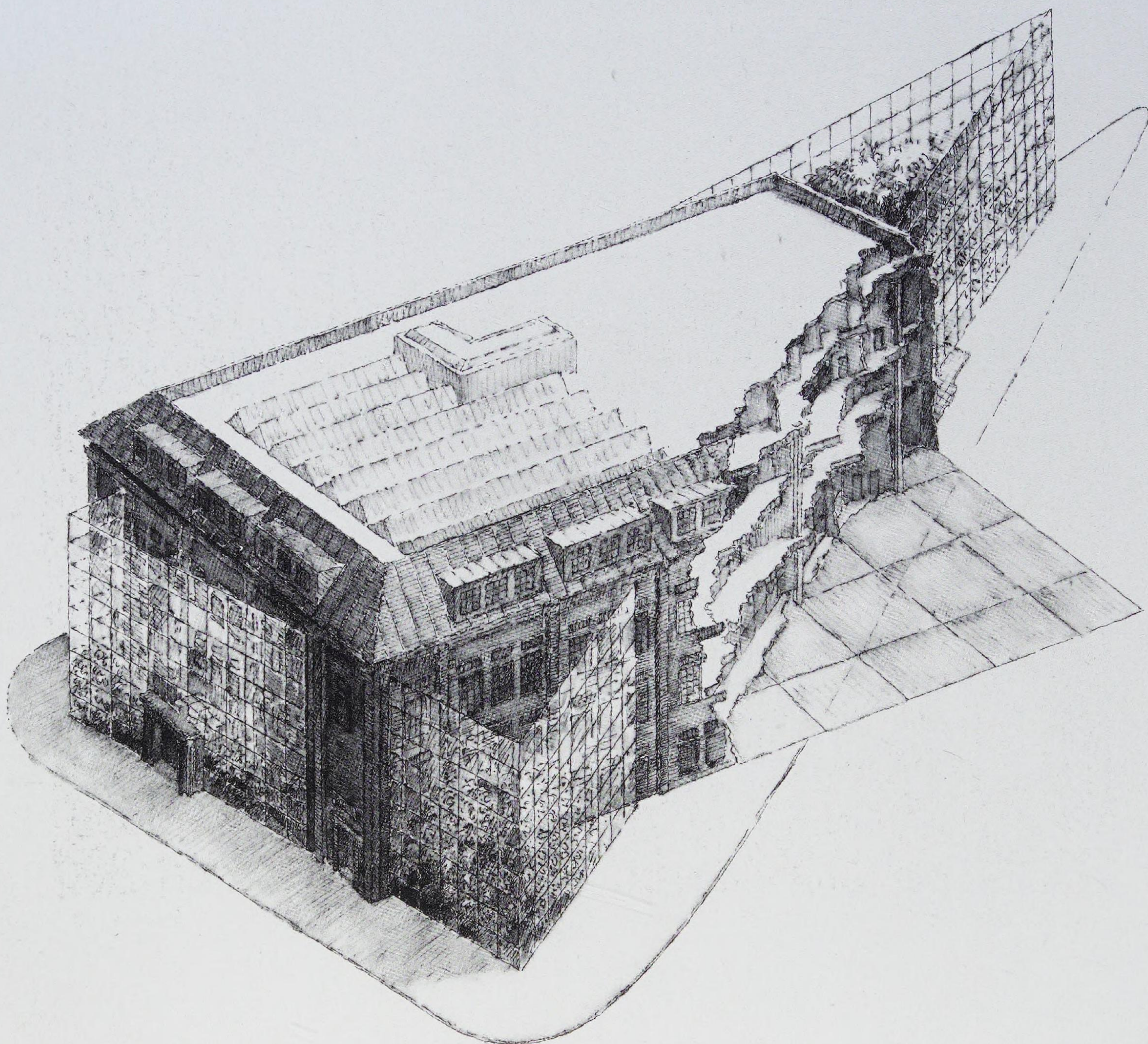
Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art, 1982, Frankfurt, West Germany: View showing glass-enclosed sculpture
garden
Ink and wash on paper, 11½" × 8¼"



Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art - View South

1983 SITE 555W J.W.

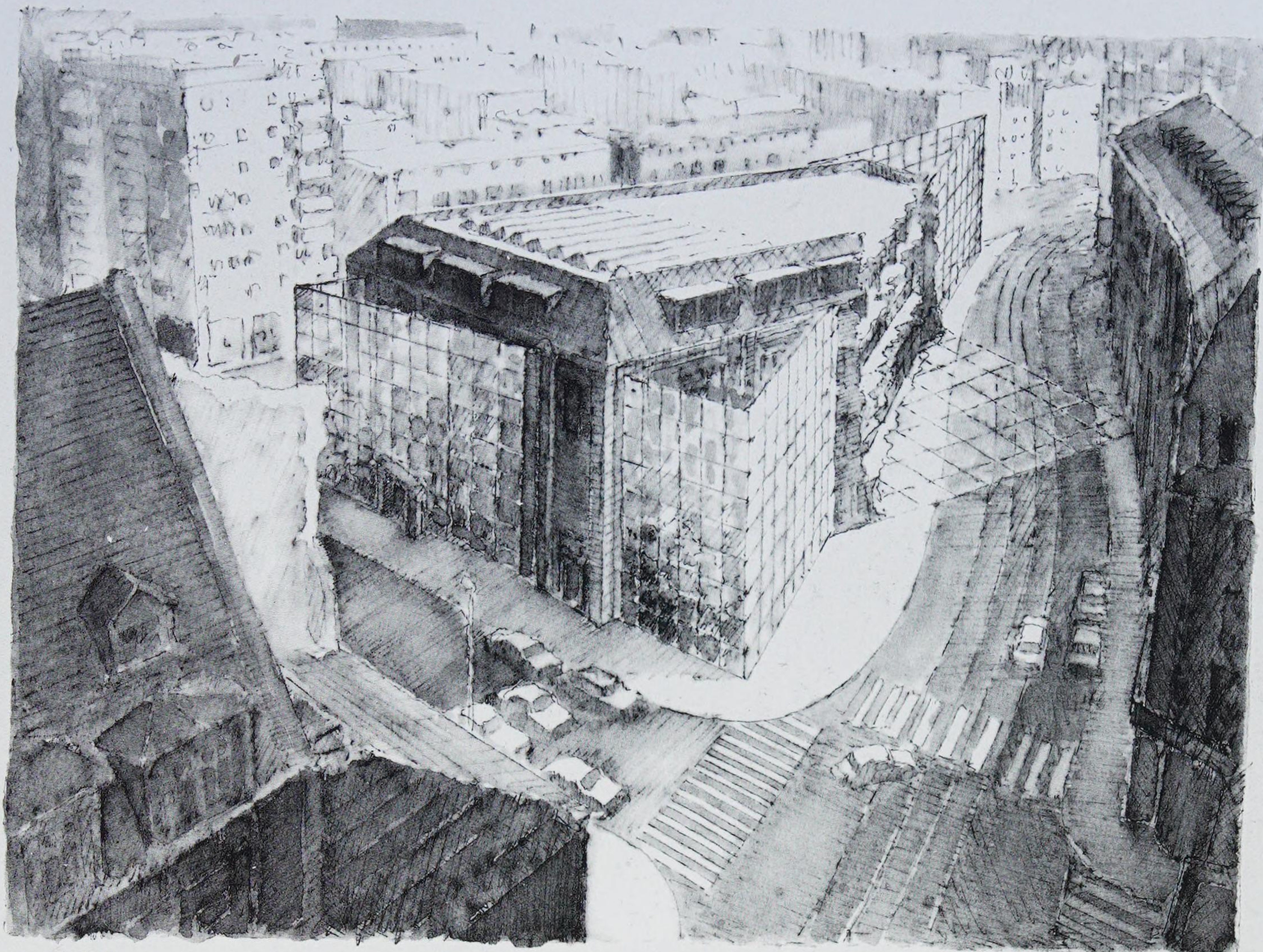
Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art, 1983, Frankfurt, West Germany: View on Domstrasse
Ink and wash on paper, 11" x 14"



Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art - General Overview

1983 SITE SSSW J.W.

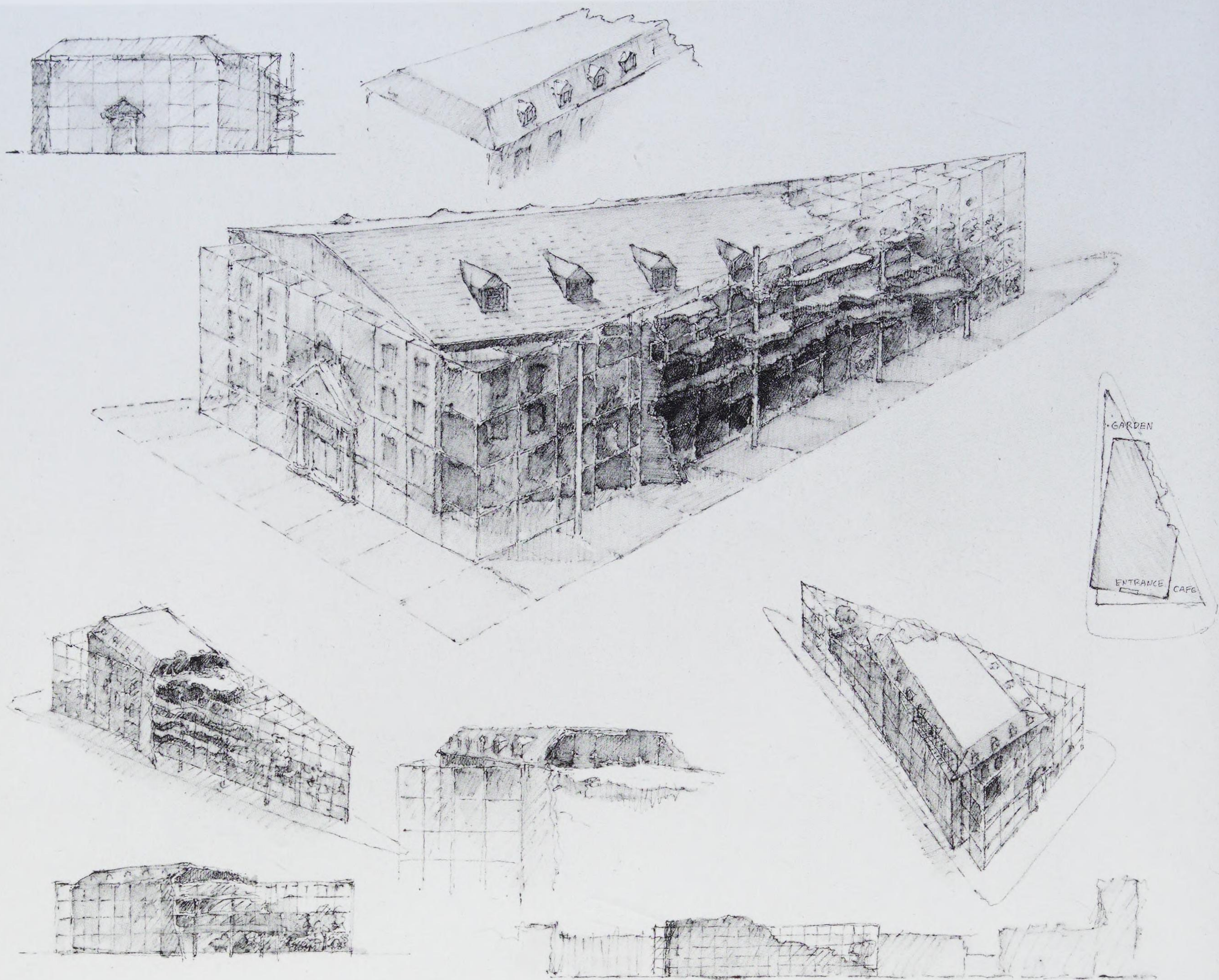
Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art, 1983, Frankfurt, West Germany: Overhead view looking east
Ink and wash on paper, 13" x 16 1/4"



Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art. - View East

1983 SITE sssw J.W.

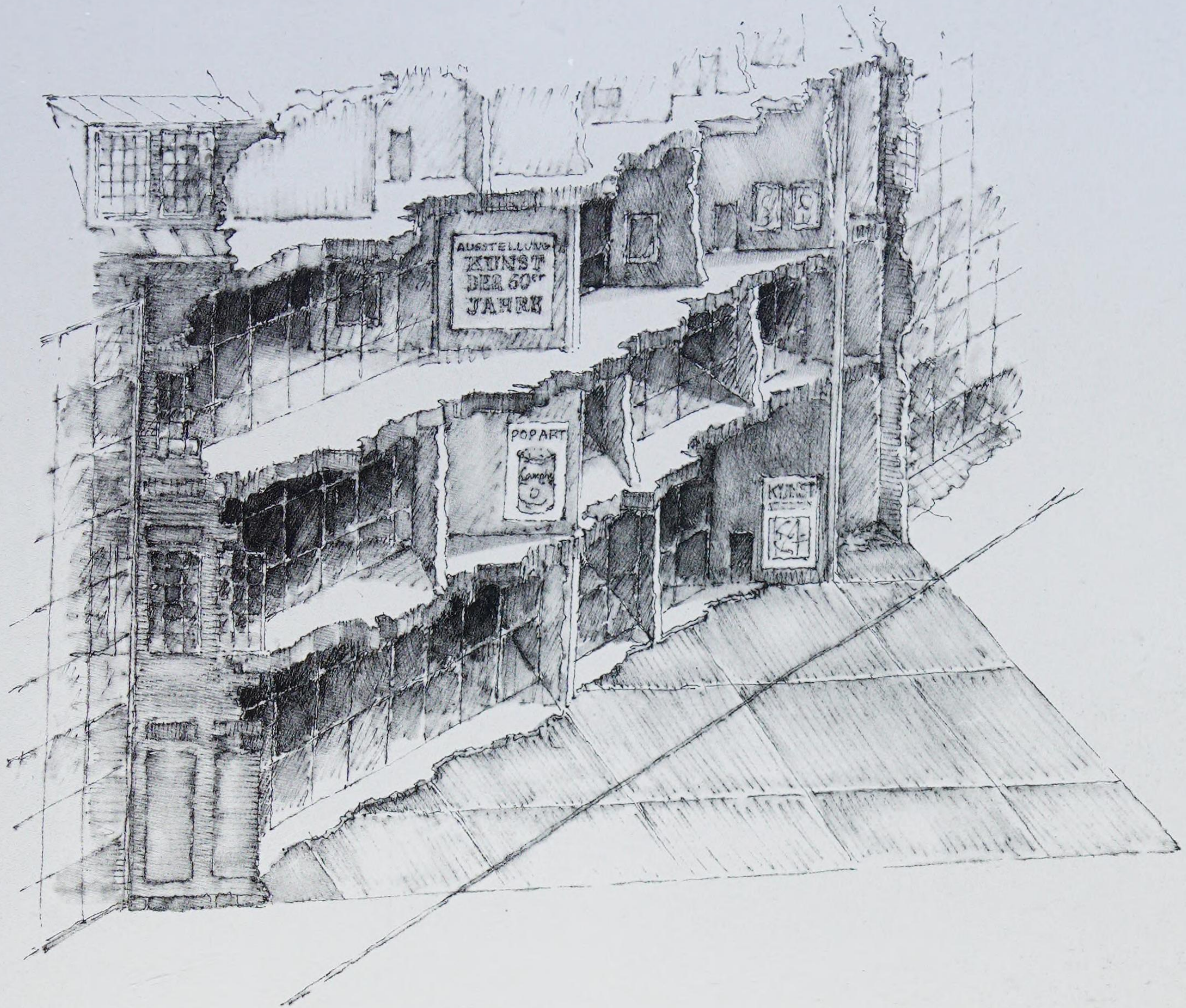
Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art, 1983, Frankfurt, West Germany: View looking east
Ink and wash on paper, 8" x 10"



Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art -

1983 SITE 88510 J.W.

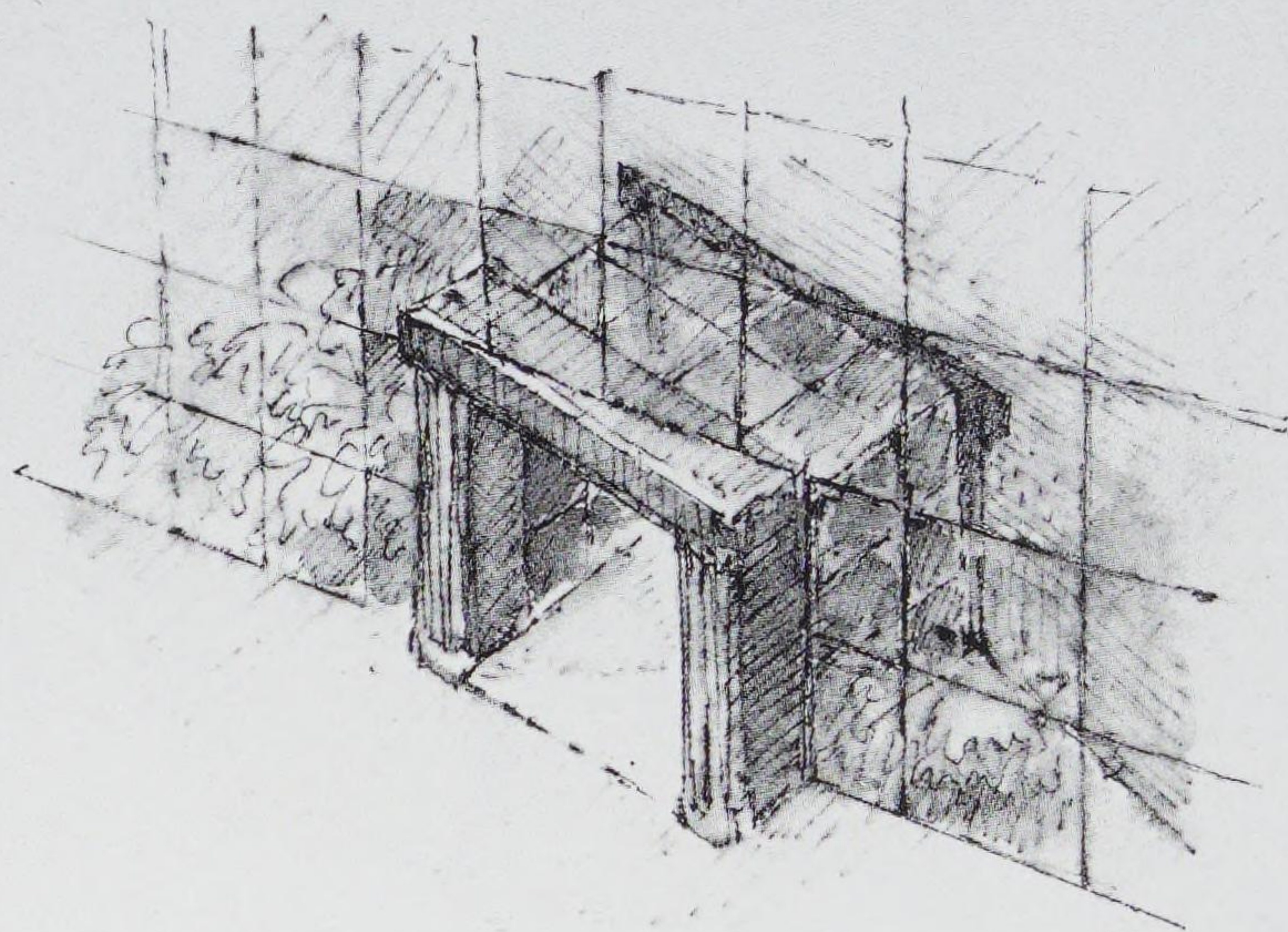
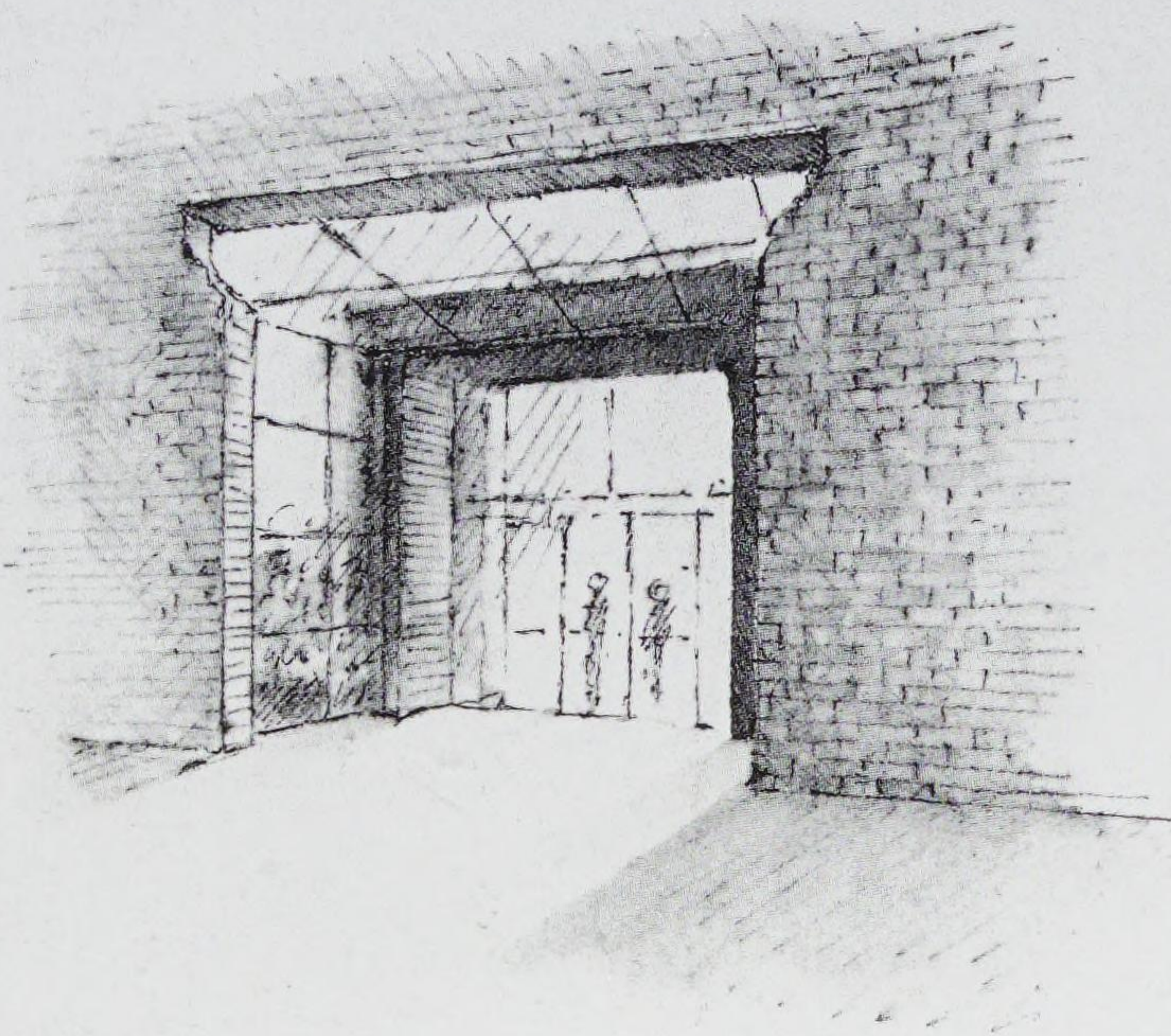
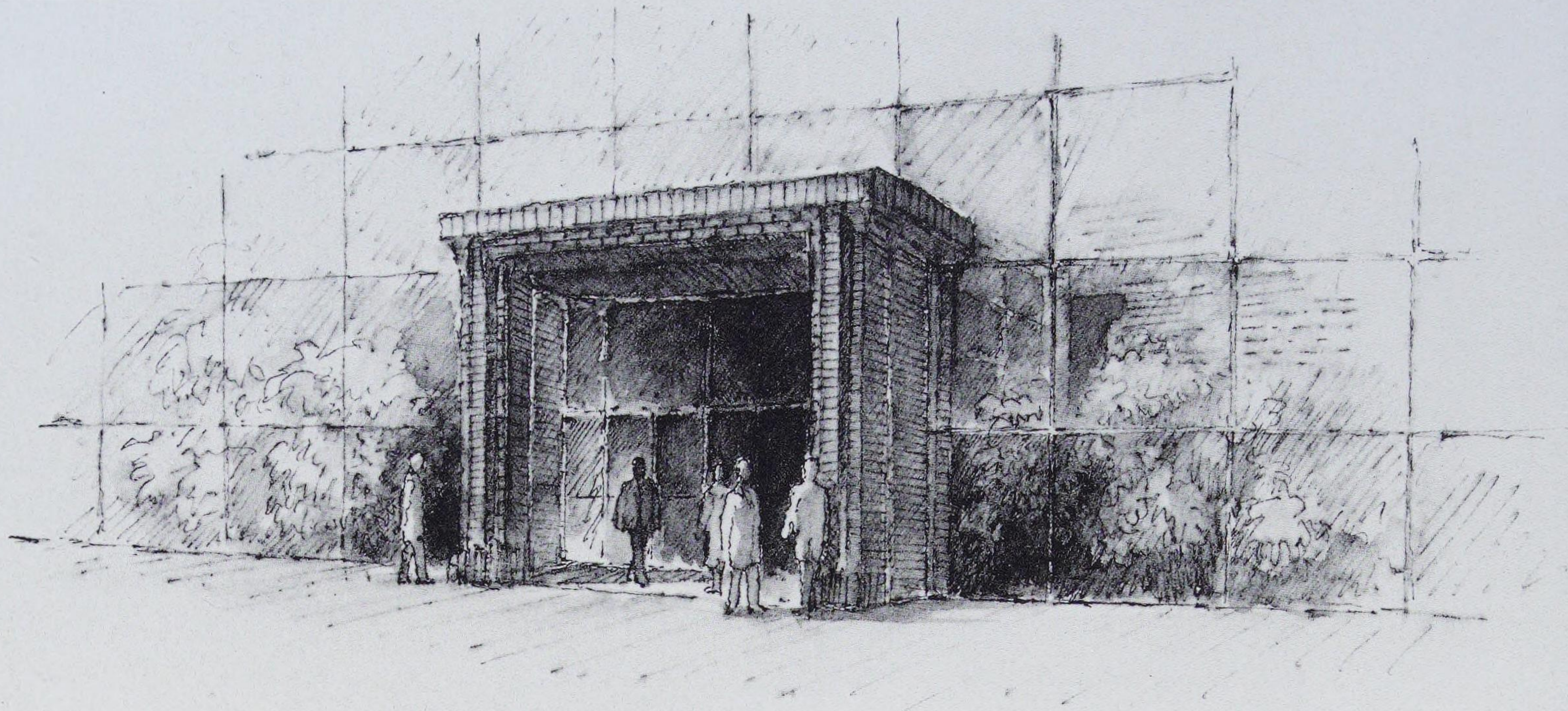
Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art, 1983, Frankfurt, West Germany: Variations of glass and masonry intersections
Ink and wash on paper, 11" × 14"



Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art - Cutaway wall exterior

1983 SITE 565W J.W.

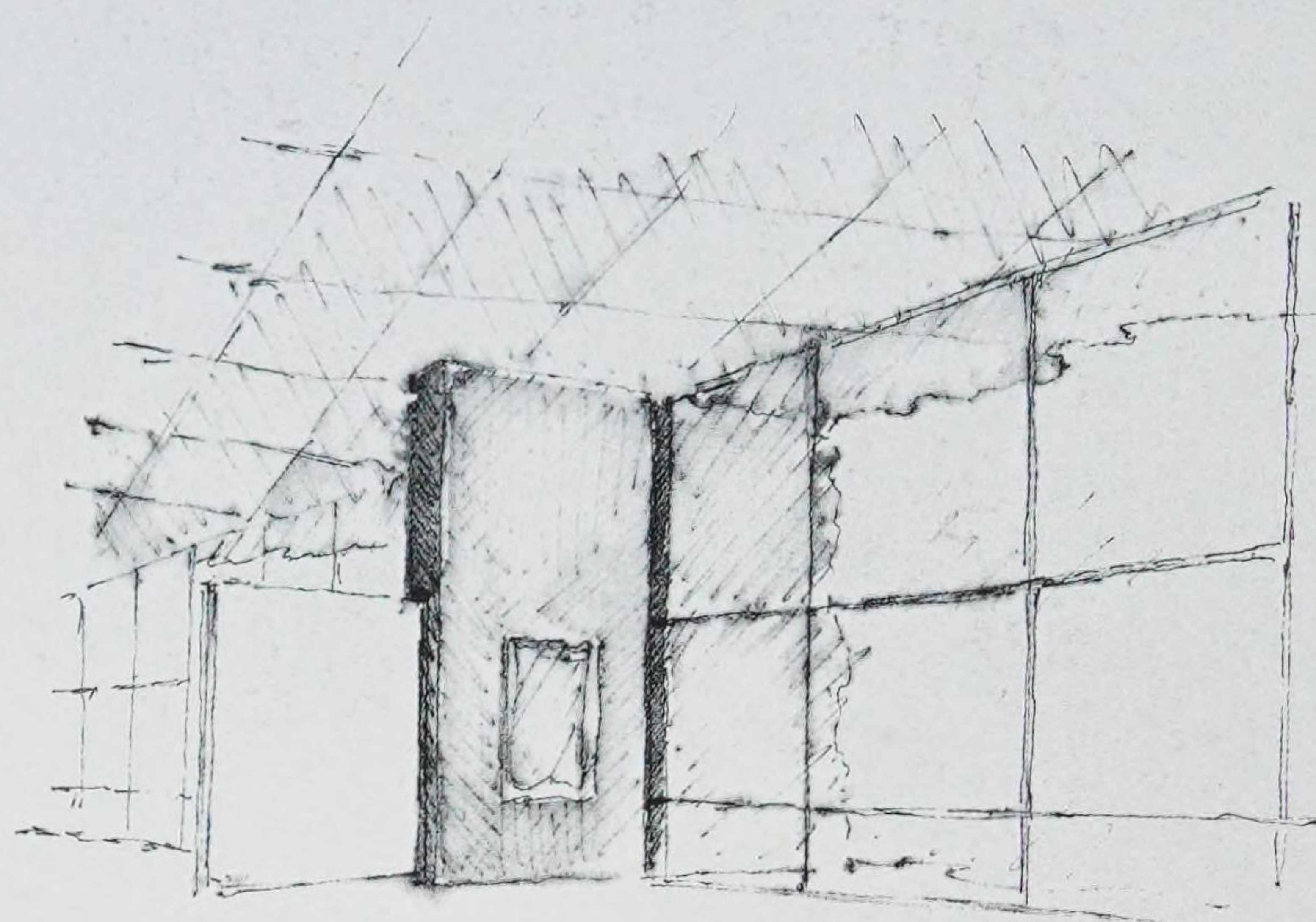
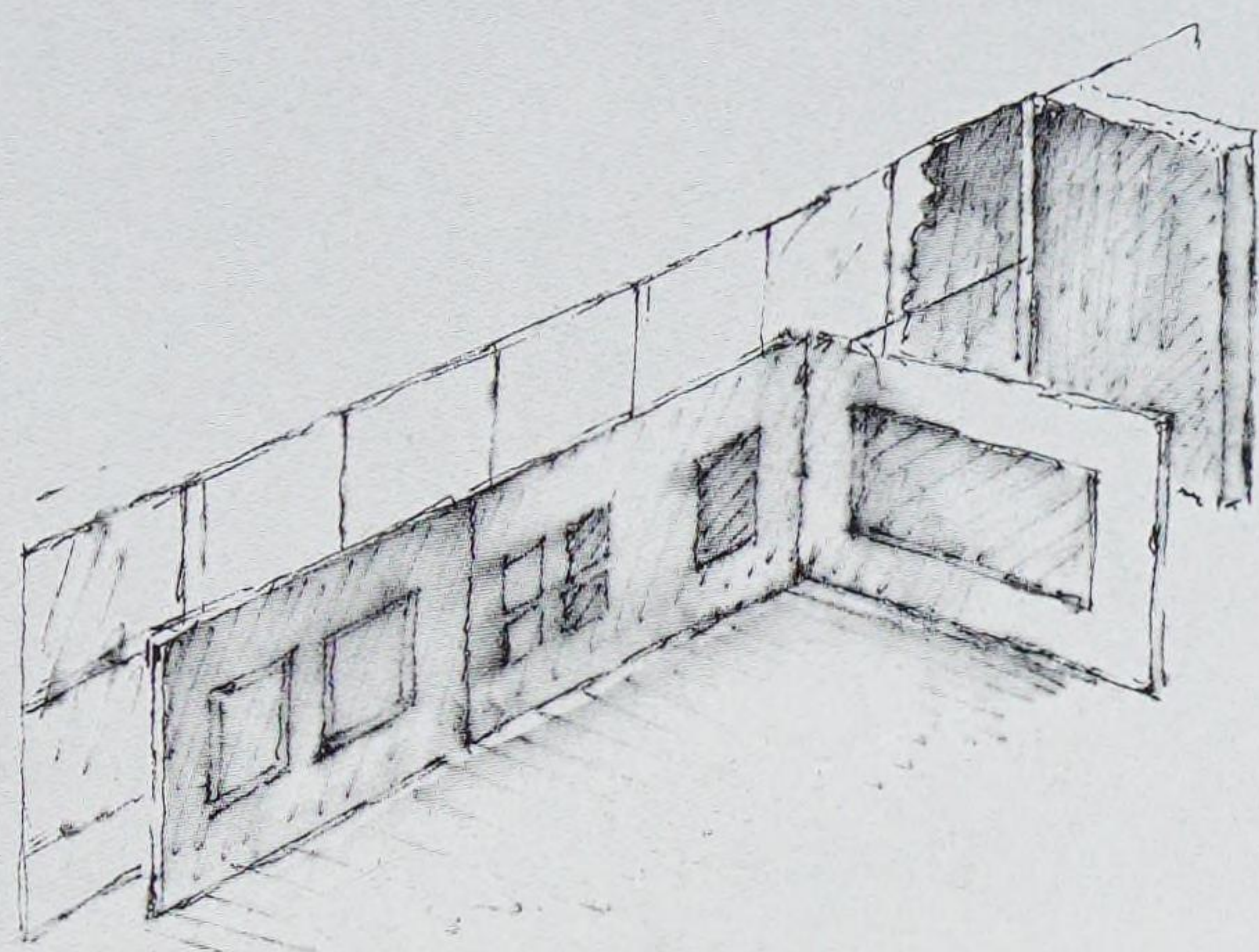
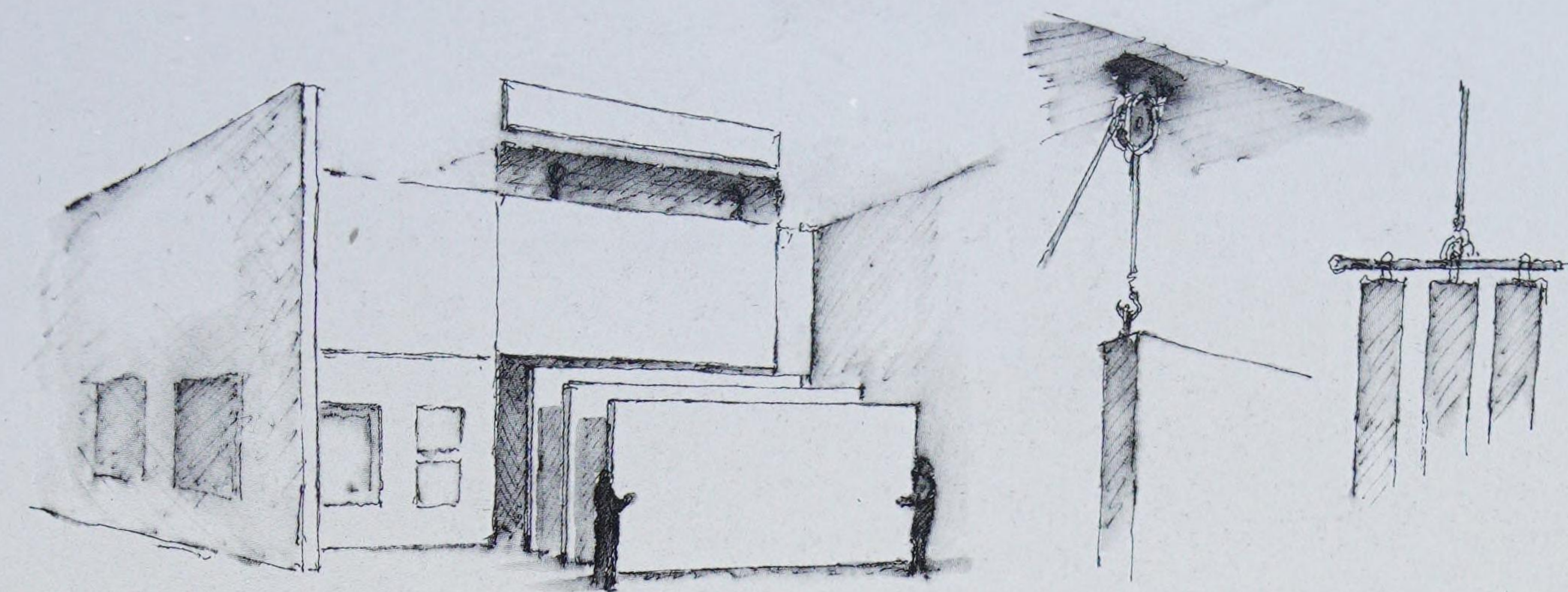
Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art, 1983, Frankfurt, West Germany: View of Braubachstrasse masonry cutaway and exposed artworks
Ink and wash on paper, 9³/₄" × 11¹/₂"



Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art - Entranceway Details

1983 SITE 555W J.W.

Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art, 1983, Frankfurt, West Germany: View of main entrance
Ink and wash on paper, 11" x 14"

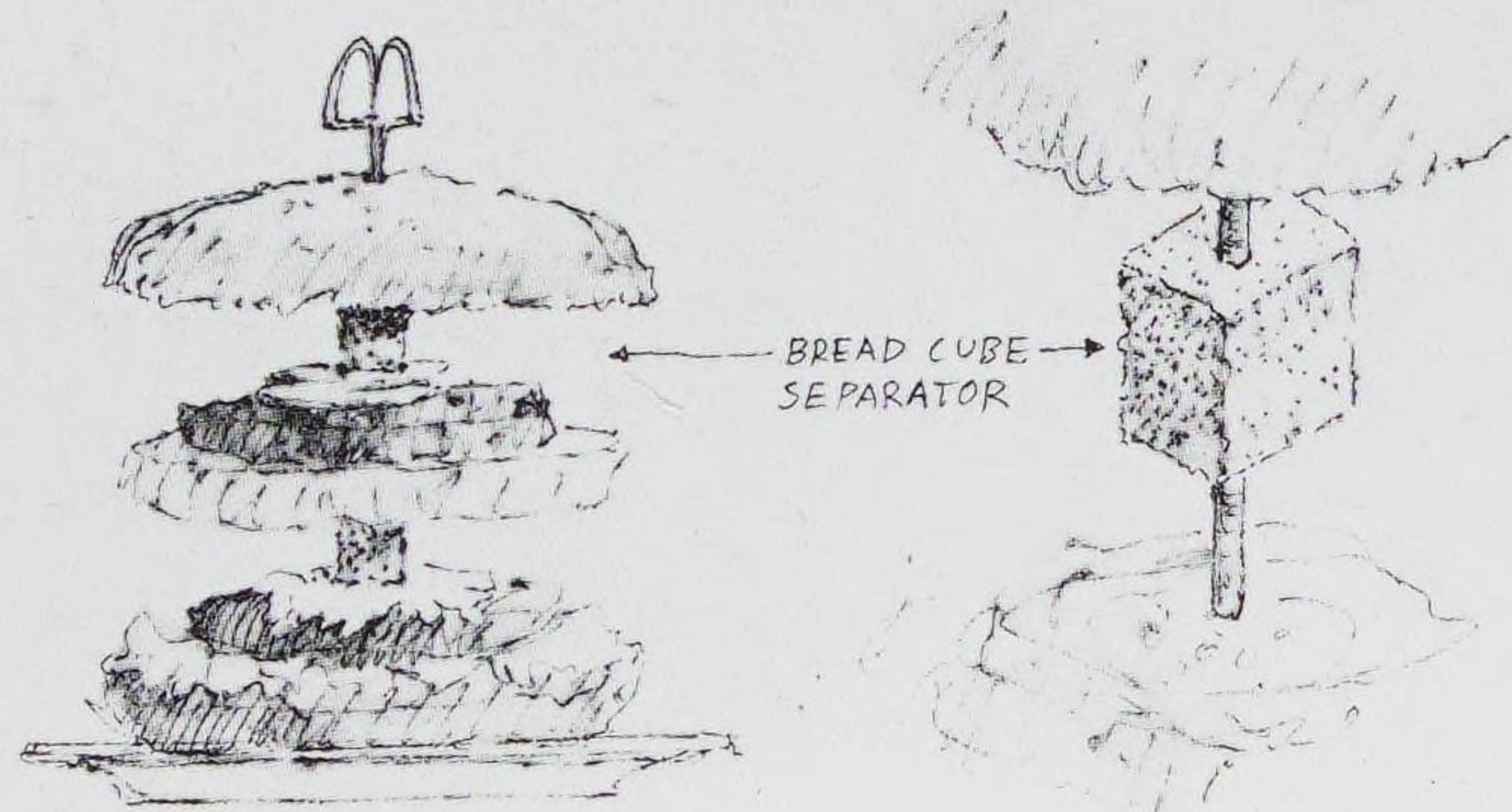
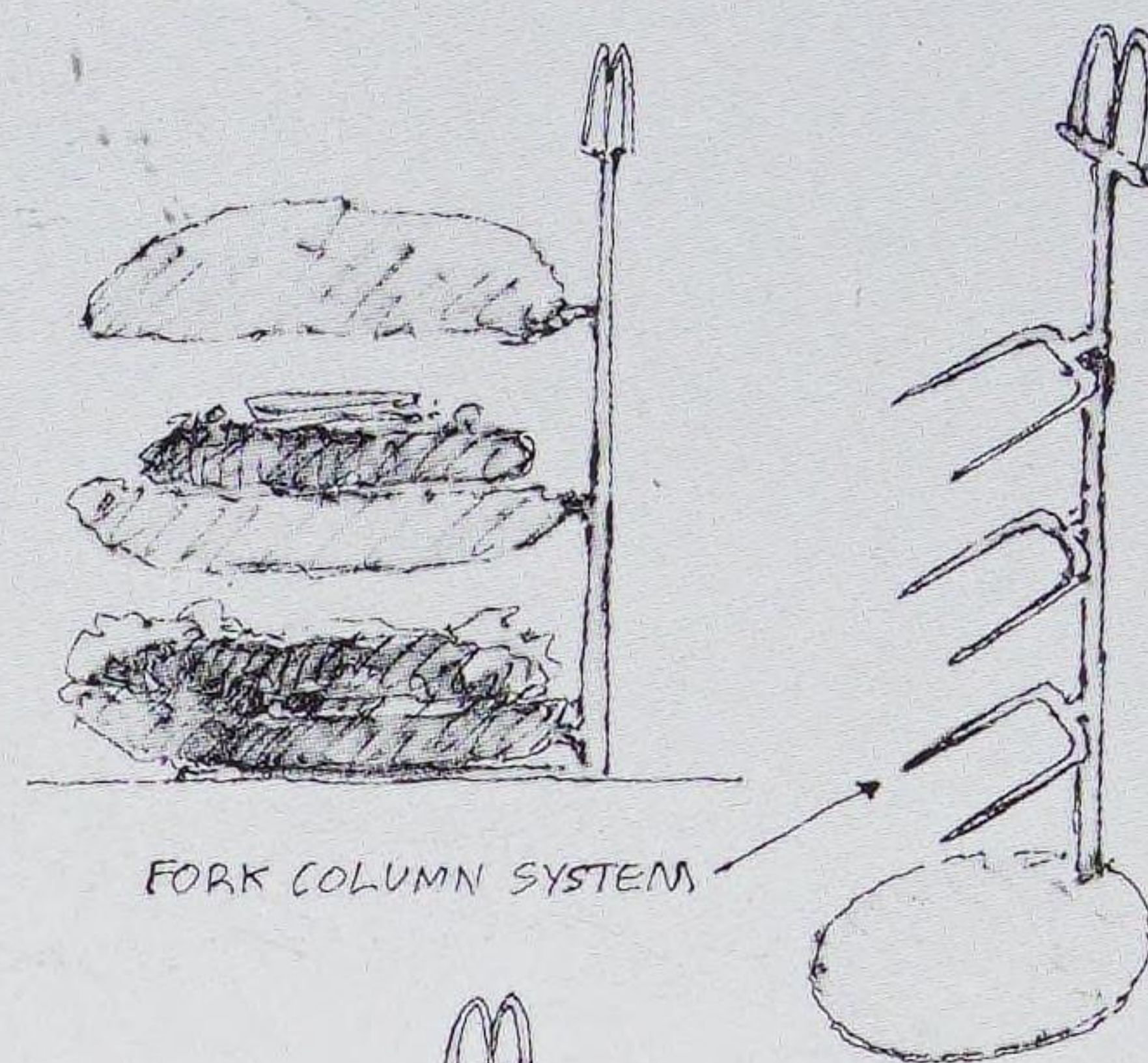
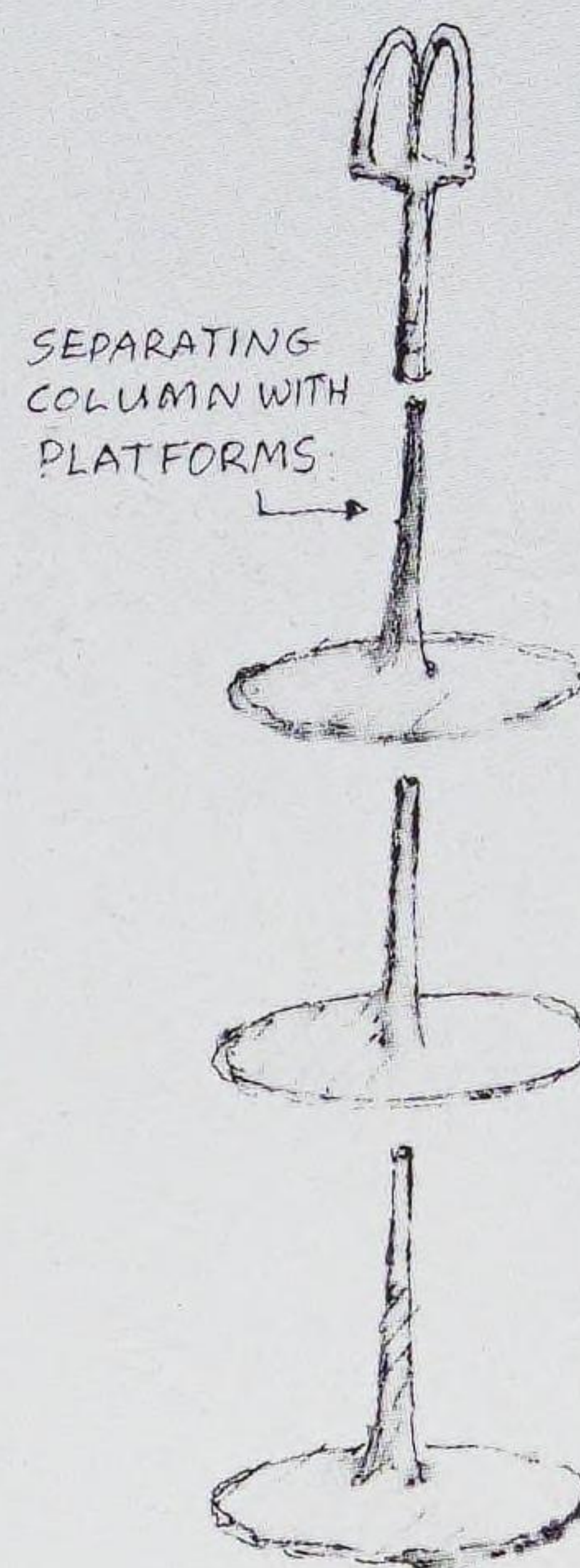
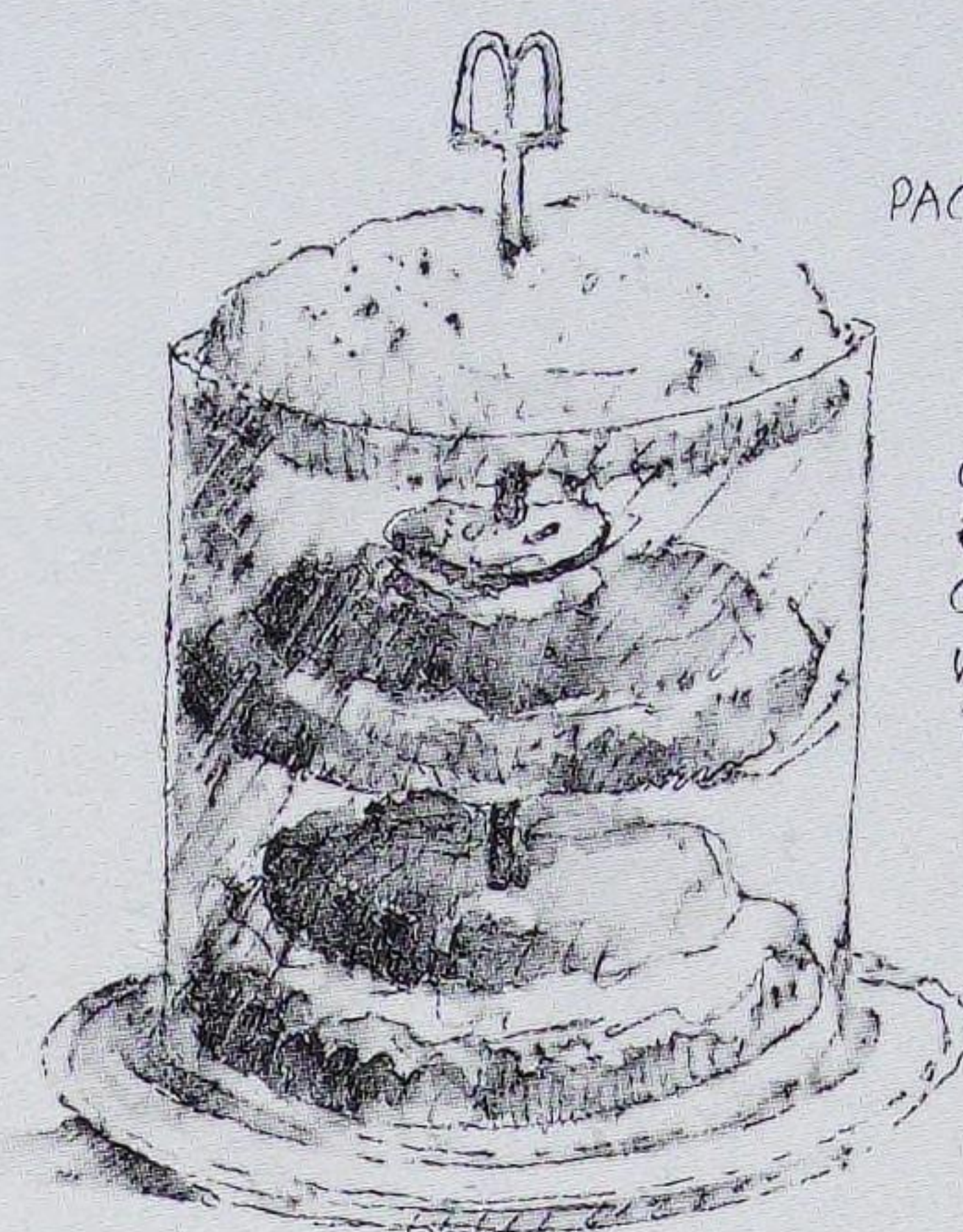
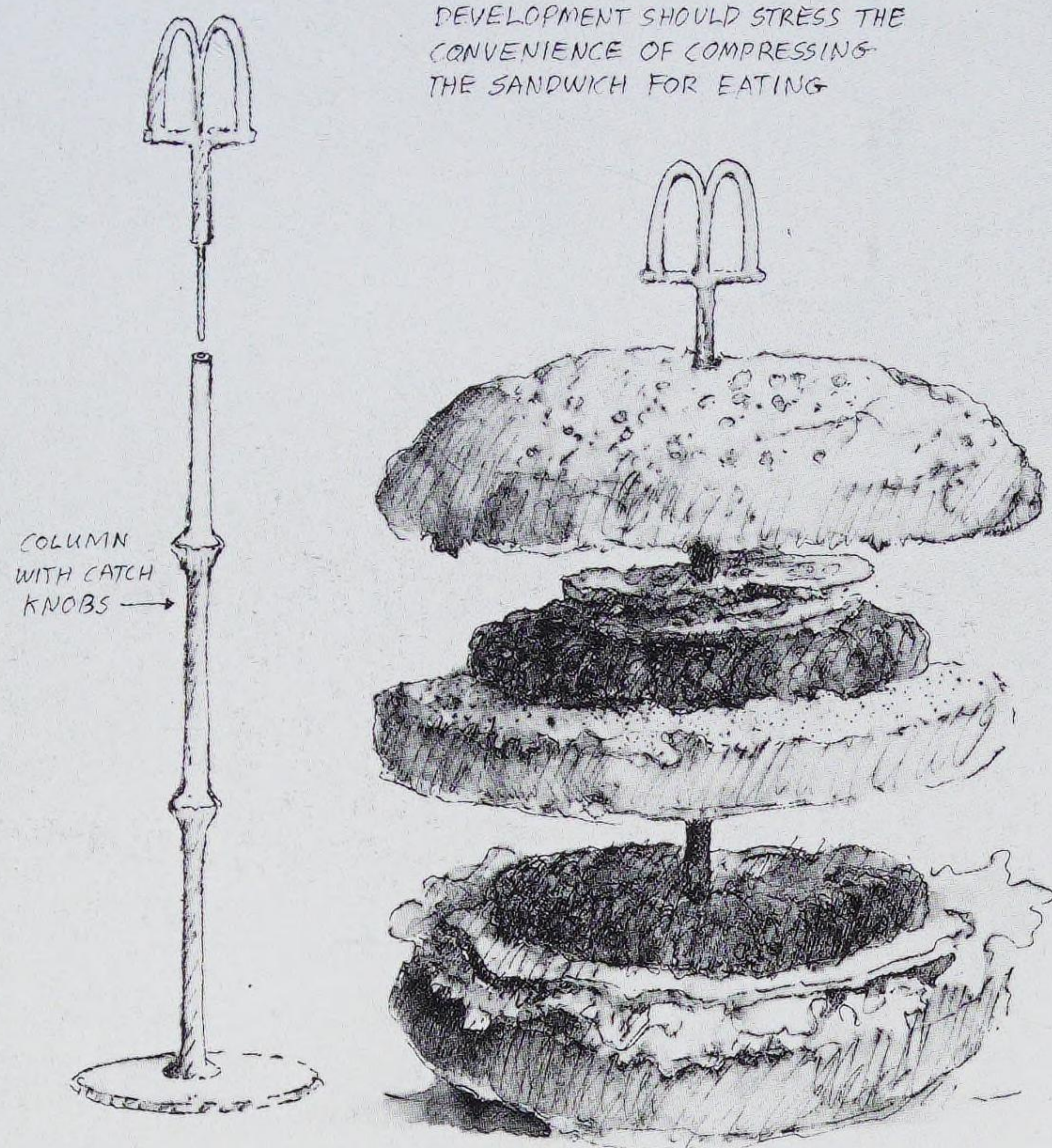


Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art - Movable walls

1983 SITE - sssw J.W.

Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art, 1983, Frankfurt, West Germany: Interior views showing movable walls and storage
Ink and wash on paper, 14" x 17"

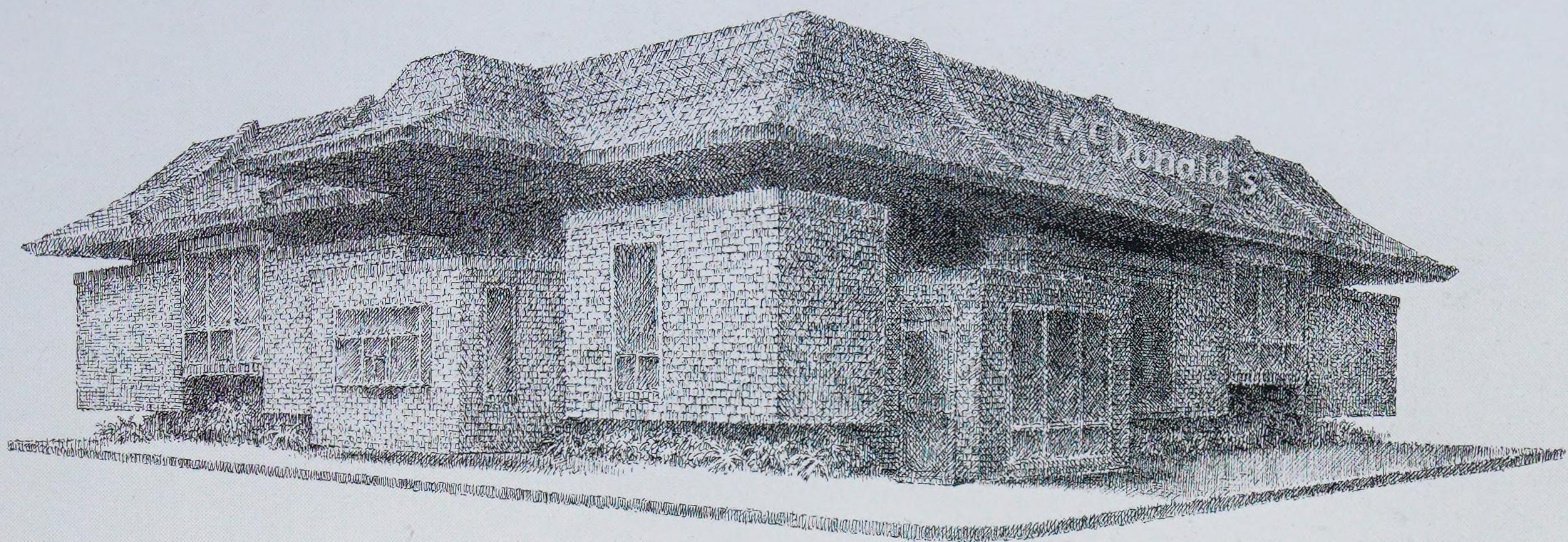
SKETCHES DEMONSTRATE VARIOUS SYSTEMS FOR SEPARATING AND SUPPORTING THE THREE LEVEL BIG MAC HAMBURGER—FINAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD STRESS THE CONVENIENCE OF COMPRESSING THE SANDWICH FOR EATING



FLOATING BIG MAC - McDONALD'S RESTAURANT - BERWYN, ILLINOIS

SITE 1983 J.W.

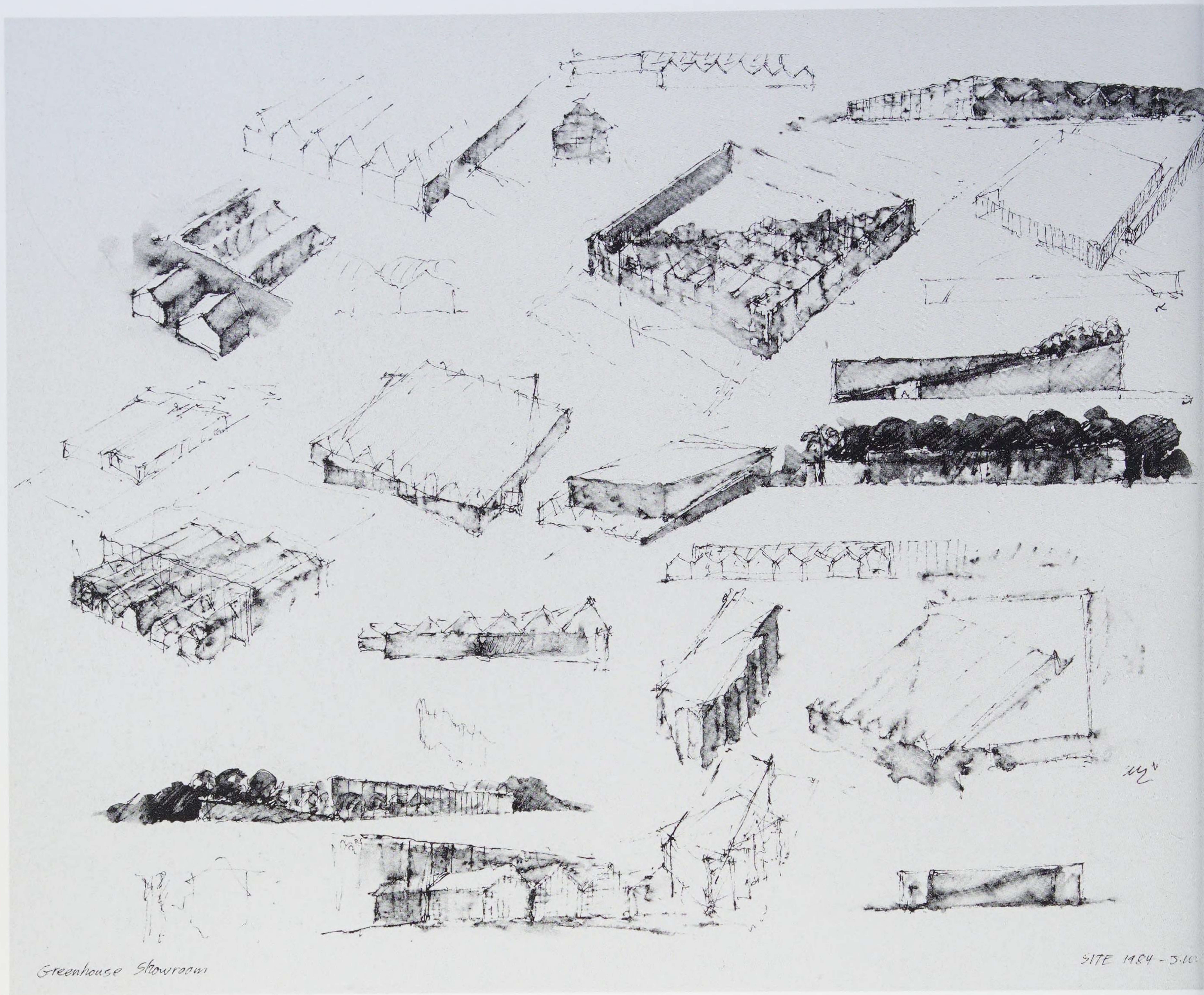
McDonald's Restaurant, 1983, Berwyn, Illinois: Experiments with a "Floating Big Mac"
Ink and wash on paper, 13 3/4" x 16 3/4"



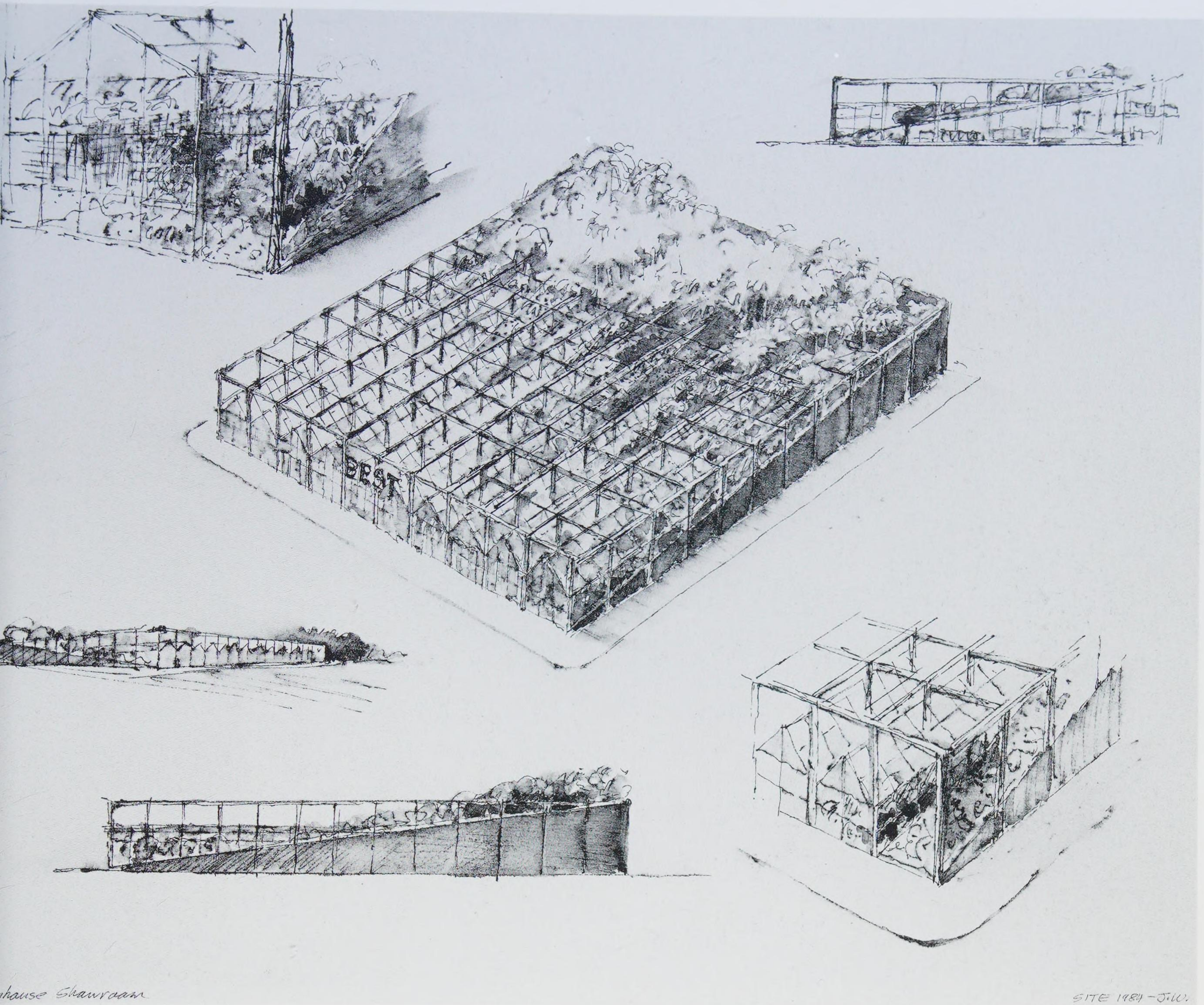
FLOATING McDONALD'S - BERWYN, ILLINOIS

SITE 1983 JW

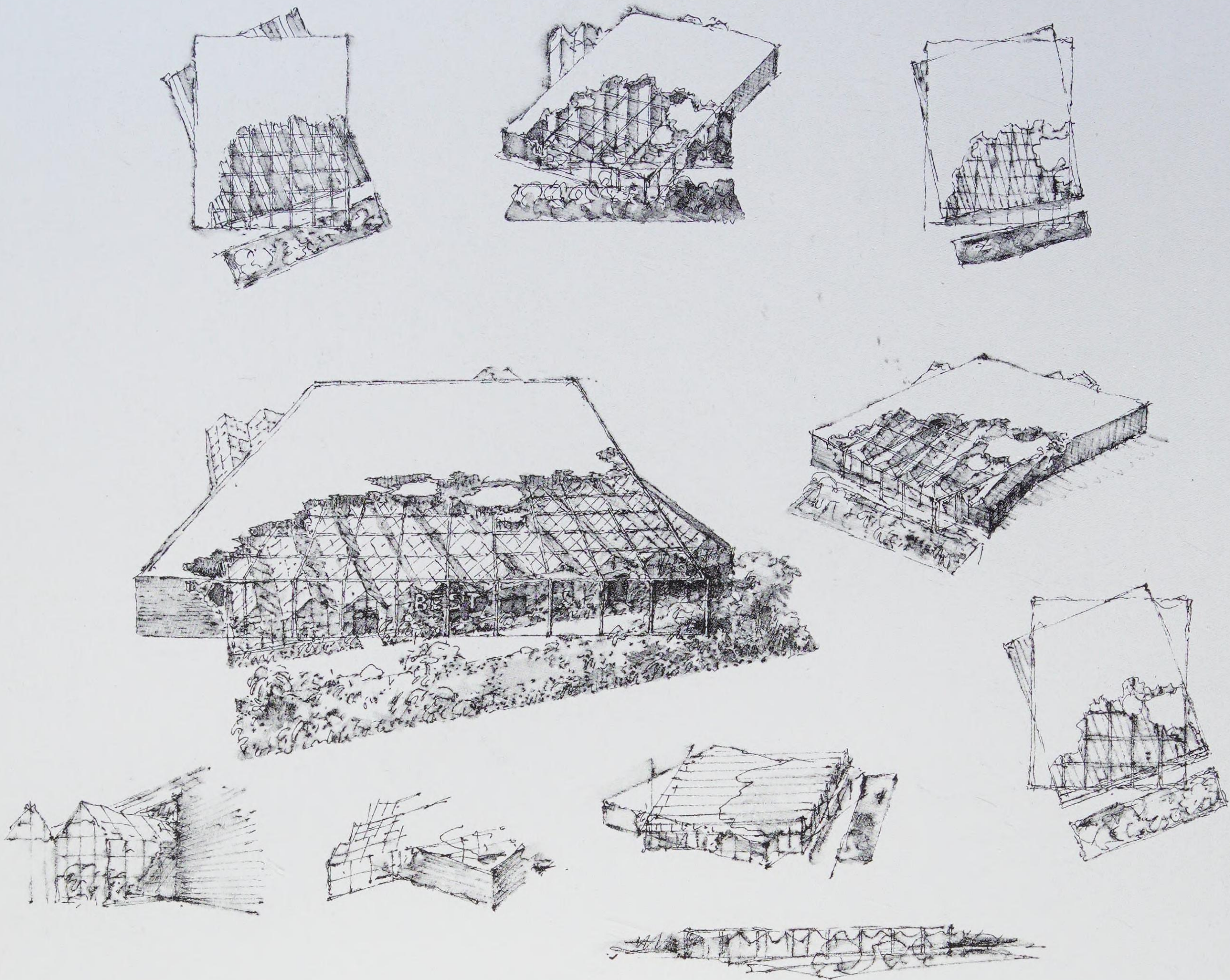
*Floating McDonald's Restaurant, 1983, Berwyn, Illinois: General view of building showing segmented parts
Pen and ink on paper, 13" × 21½"*



*Best Greenhouse Square Showroom, 1984, San Leandro, California: Studies of intersections between existing greenhouses and showroom
Ink and wash on paper, 14" × 17"*



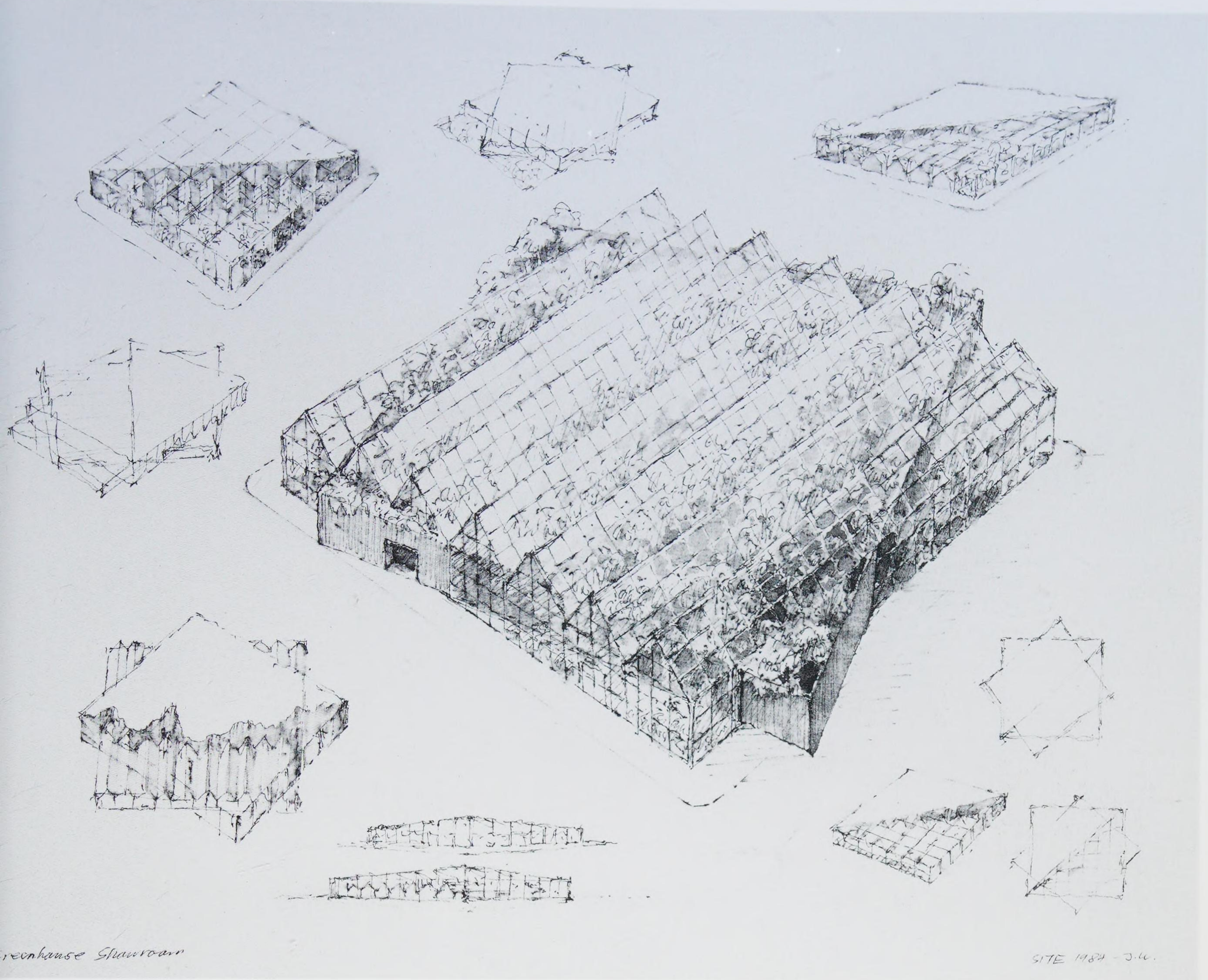
*Best Greenhouse Square Showroom, 1984, San Leandro, California: Studies of greenhouse intersections
Ink and wash on paper, 14" × 17"*



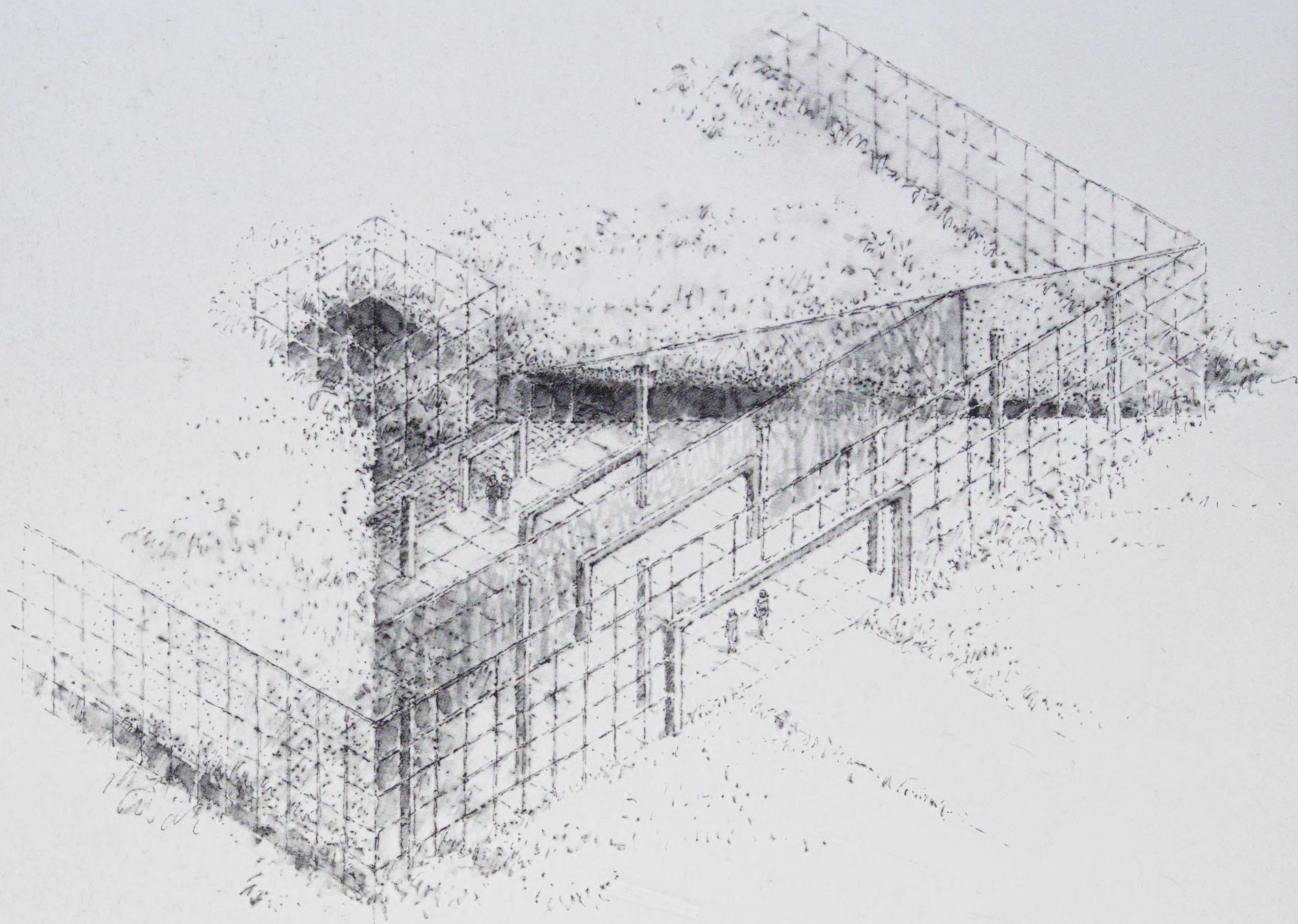
Greenhouse Showroom

SITE 1984-J

*Best Greenhouse Square Showroom, 1984, San Leandro, California: Studies of greenhouse intersections
Ink and wash on paper, 14" × 17"*



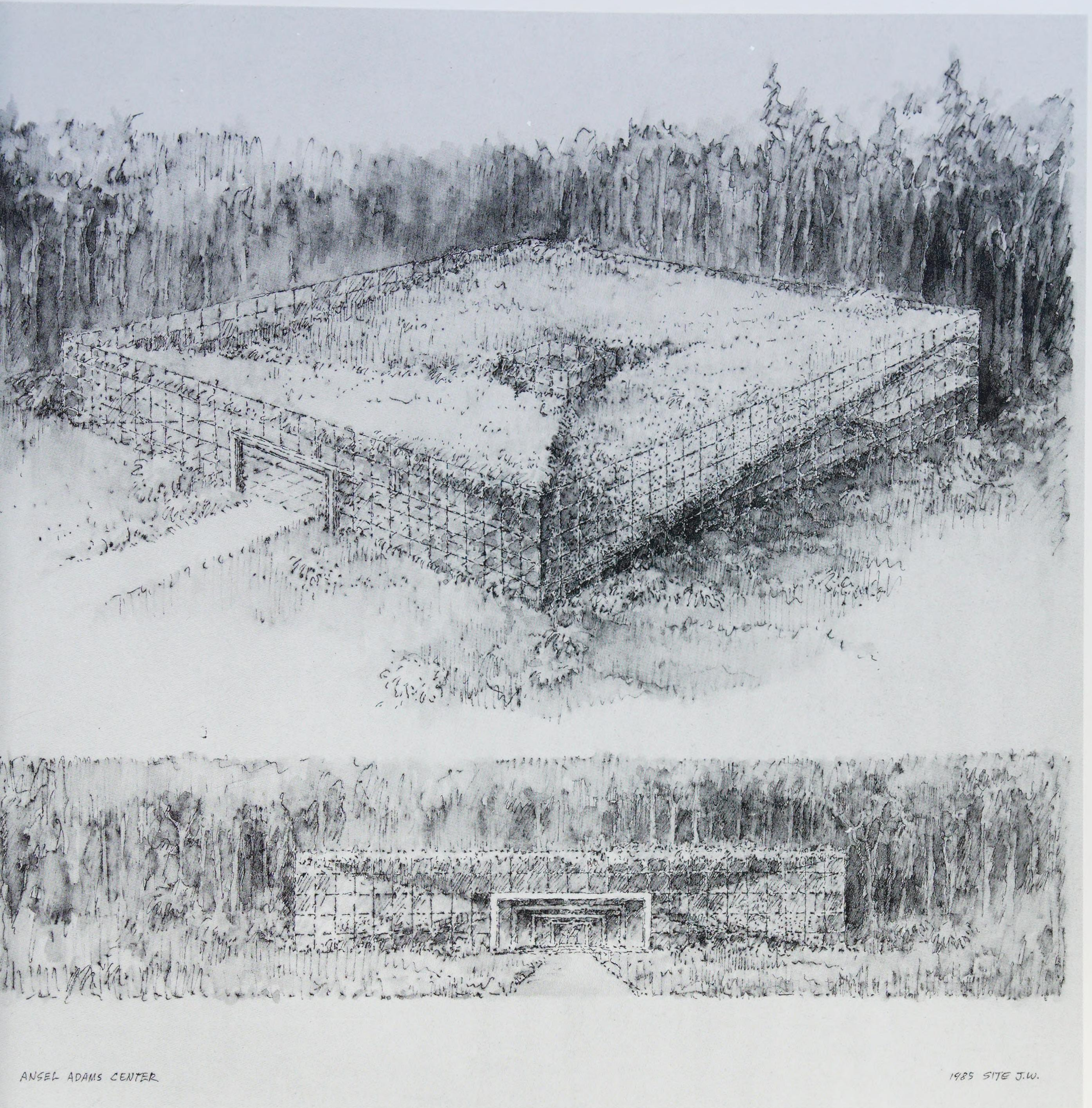
*Best Greenhouse Square Showroom, 1984, San Leandro, California: Studies of greenhouse intersections
Ink and wash on paper, 14" × 17"*



ANSEL ADAMS CENTER - ENTRYWAY (WITHOUT ROOF)

SITE J.W. 1985

*Ansel Adams Center, 1985, Carmel, California: View of entrance showing arches and photo wall
Ink and wash on paper, 11" x 14"*



ANSEL ADAMS CENTER

1985 SITE J.W.

*Ansel Adams Center, 1985, Carmel, California: General view of project showing elevated landscape and facade
Ink and wash on paper, 18" × 24", collection Jacqueline Fowler, Stamford, Connecticut*



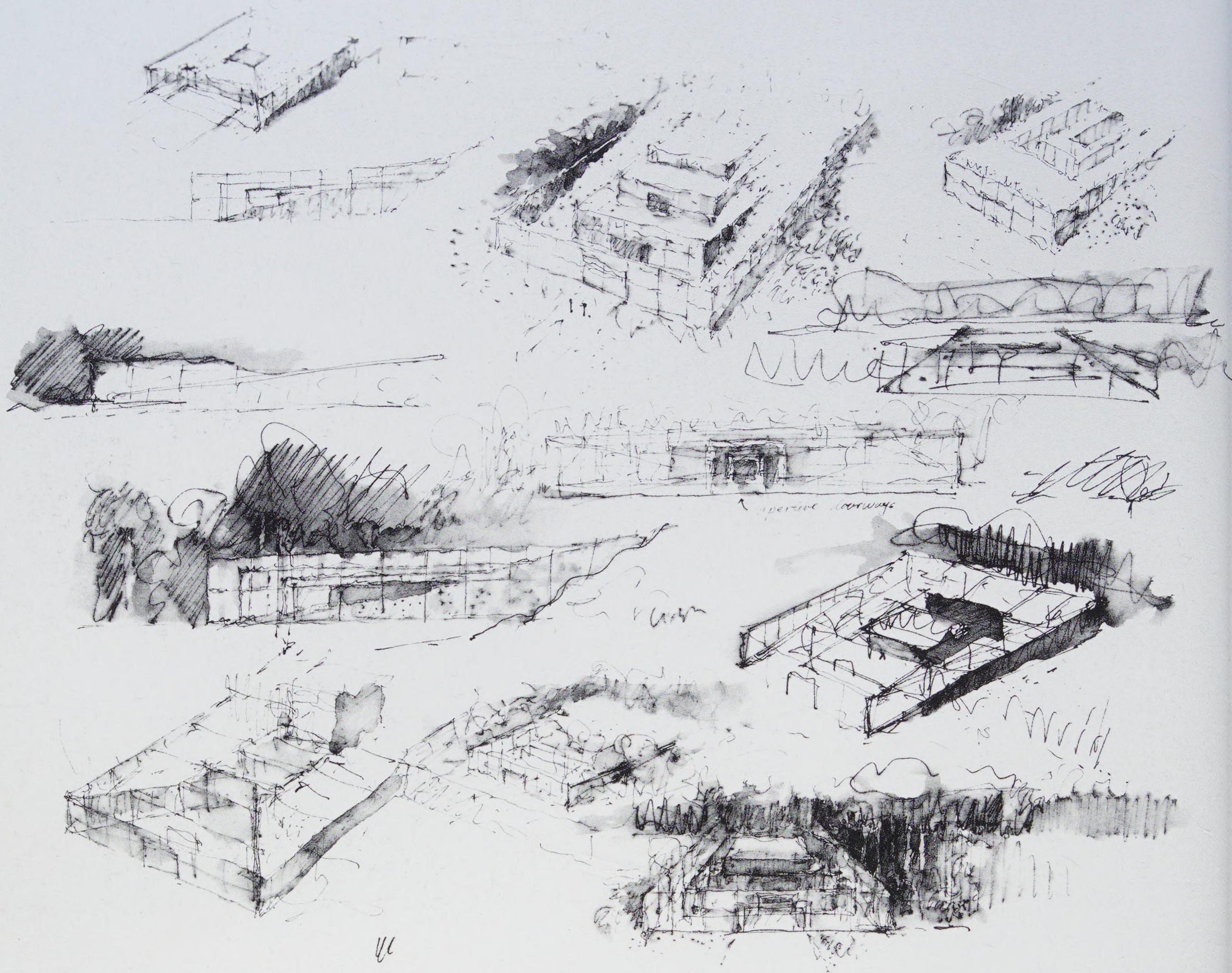
*Ansel Adams Center, 1985, Carmel, California: Studies of integration of meadow with building
 Ink and wash on paper, 14" × 17"*



Ansel Adams Center - Carmel, California

SITE JUV. 1985

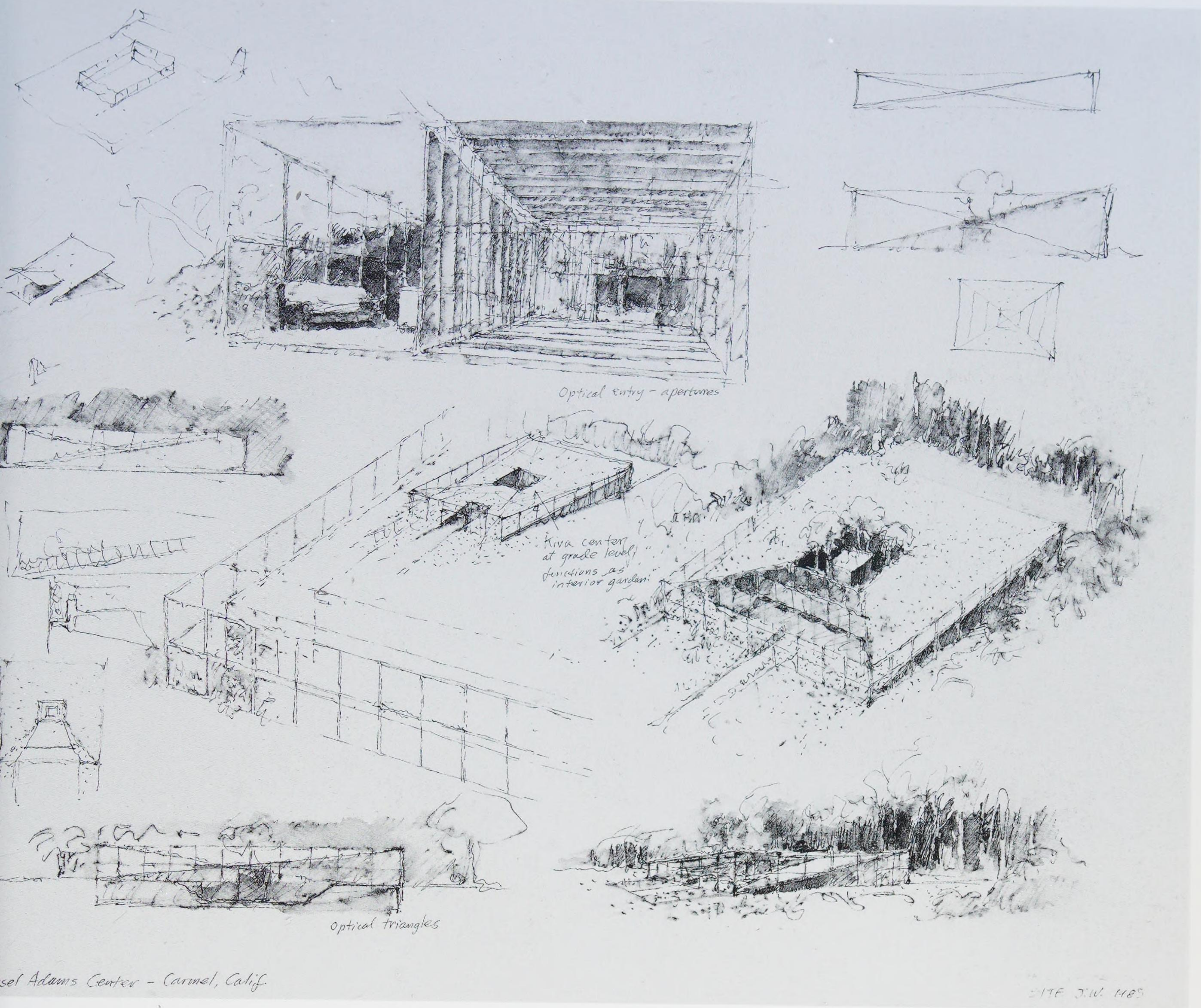
*Ansel Adams Center, 1985, Carmel, California: Studies of integration of meadow with building
Ink and wash on paper, 14" × 17"*



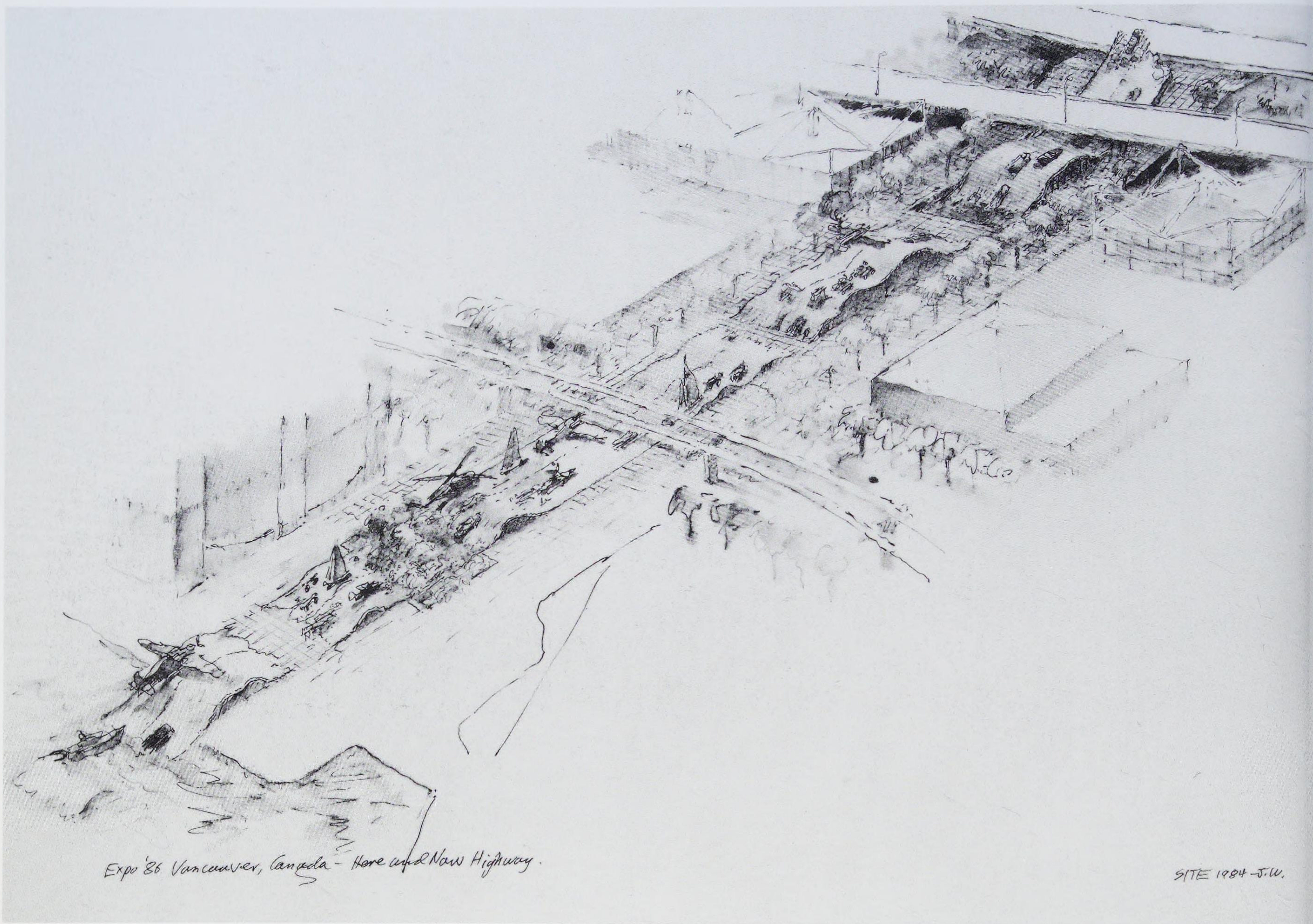
Ansel Adams Center - Carmel, Calif.

SITE J.V. 1485

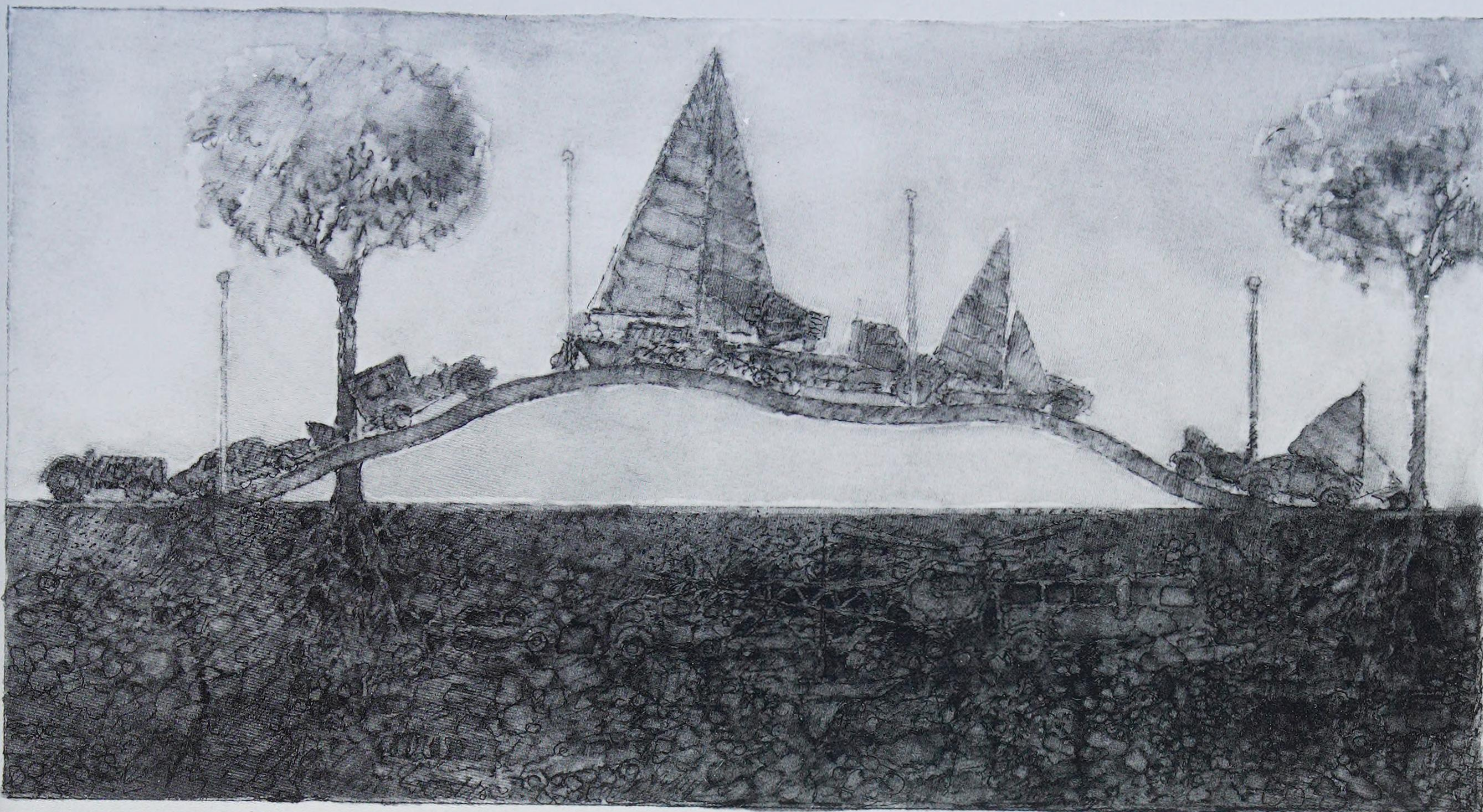
Ansel Adams Center, 1985, Carmel, California: Studies of integration of landscape and structure
Ink and wash on paper, 14" x 17"



Ansel Adams Center, 1985, Carmel, California: Studies of interior and integration of landscape and structure
Ink and wash on paper, 14" x 17"



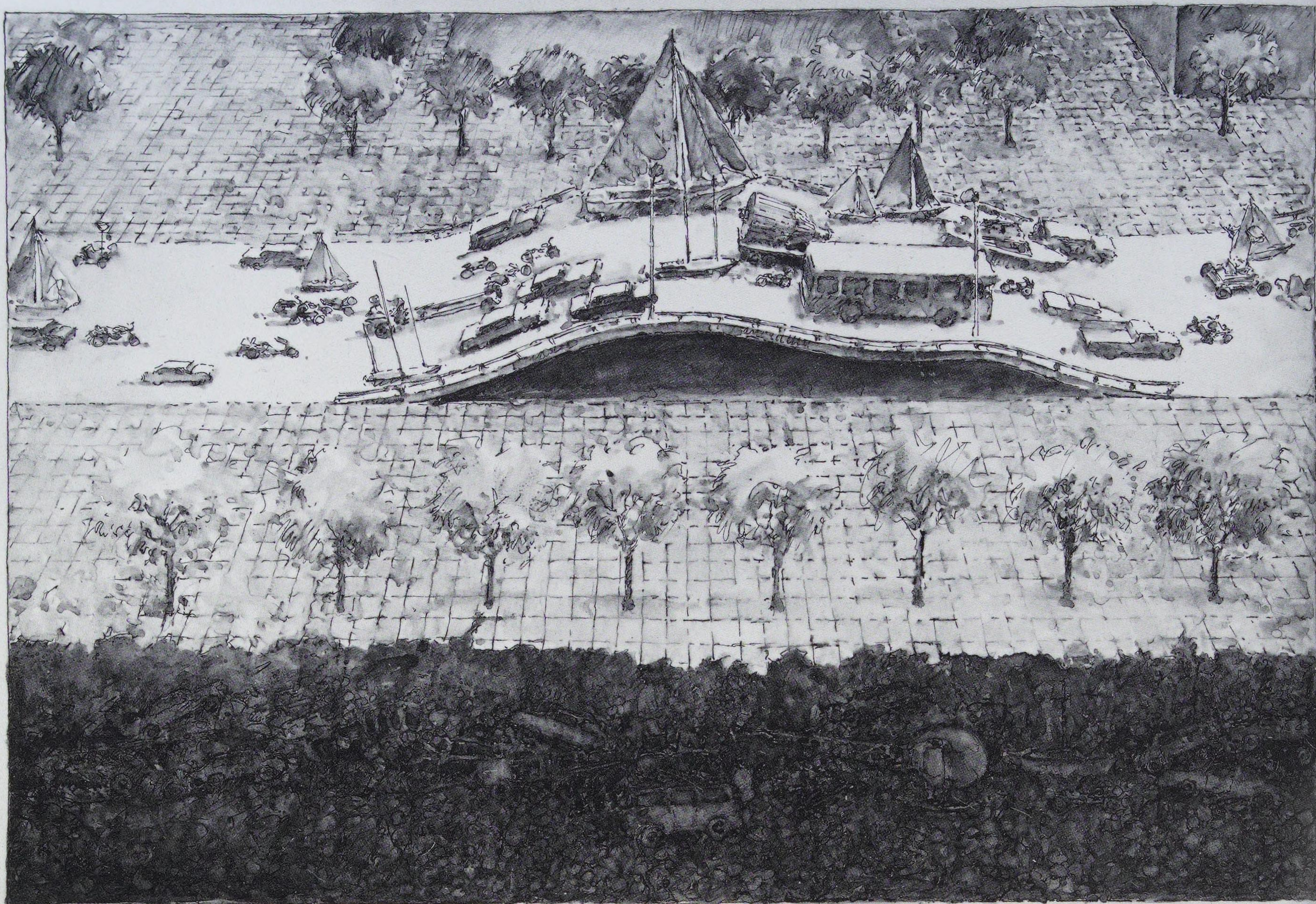
*Highway '86 Processional, 1984, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada: Study of processional
with mounted vehicles
Ink and wash on tracing paper, 14" × 17"*



HIGHWAY 86 - EXPO 86, VANCOUVER, B.C.
SECTION OF HIGHWAY OVER LANDFILL COMPOSED OF DISCARDED VEHICLES

SITE J.W. '85

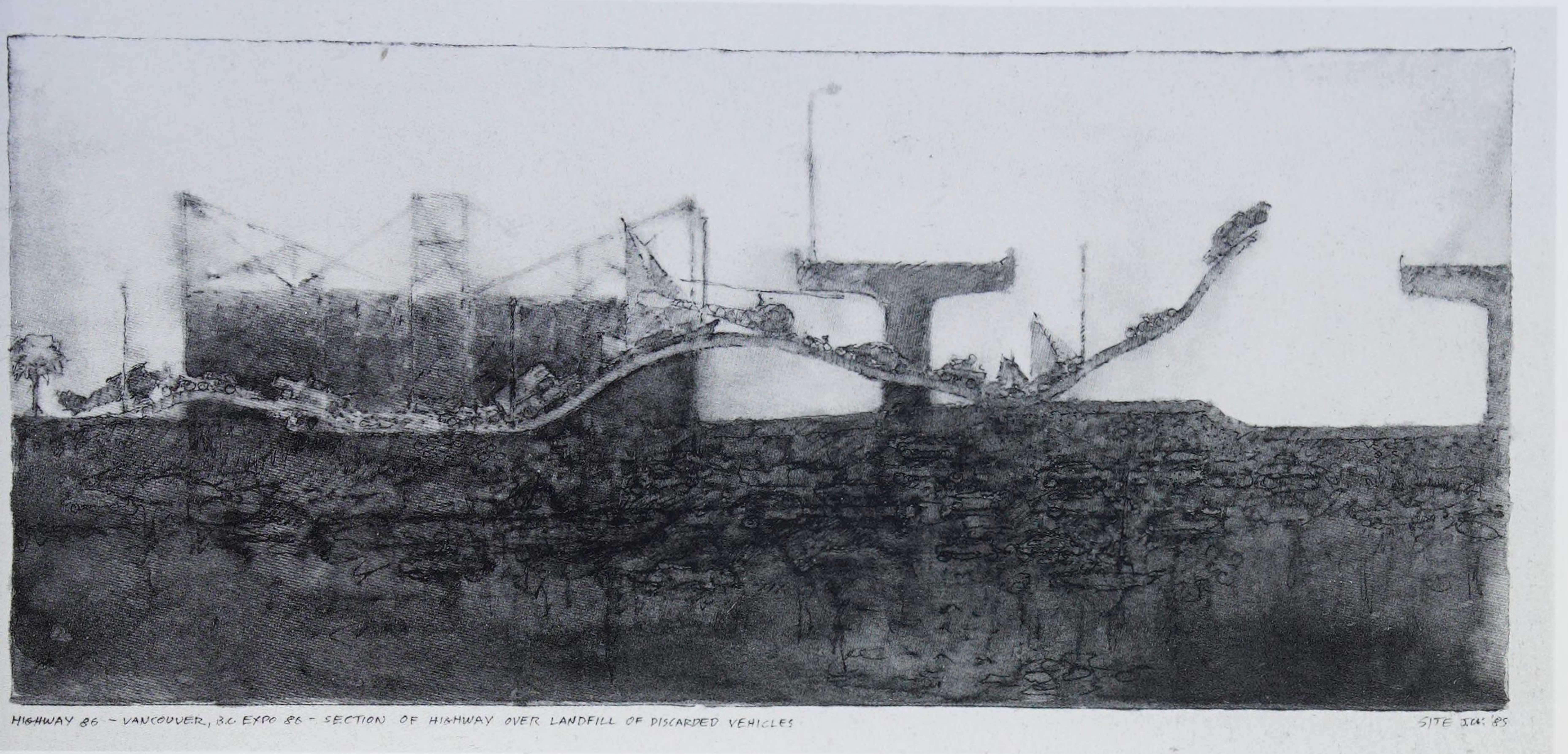
*Highway '86 Processional, 1985, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada: Study of project elevation
with mounted vehicles
Ink and wash on paper, 14" x 17"*



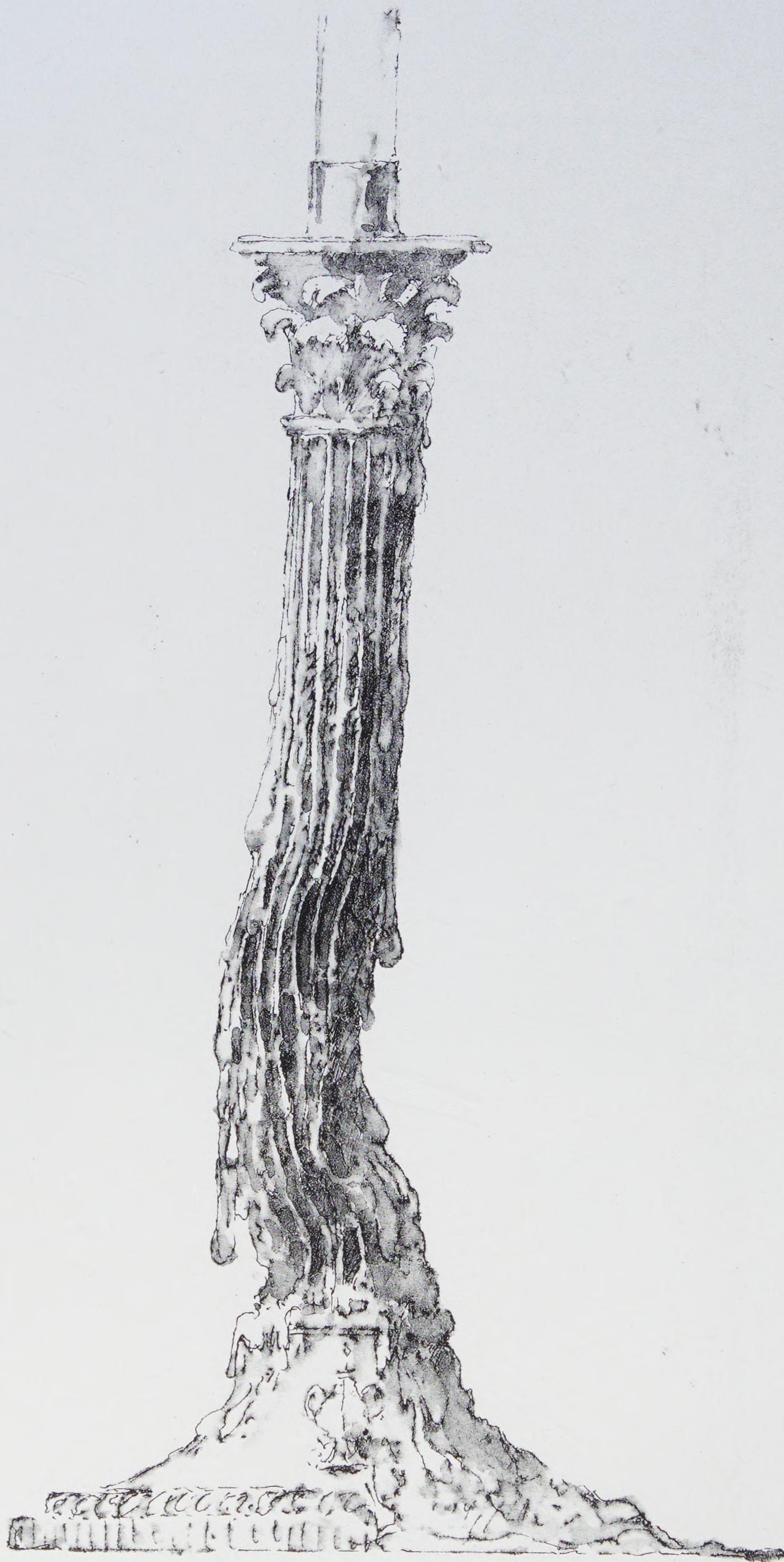
HIGHWAY 86 - VANCOUVER

SITE 1986 J.W.

*Highway '86 Processional, 1986, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada: View of project with underground automobile landfill
Ink and wash on mylar, 13³/₄" × 20"*



*Highway '86 Processional, 1985, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada: Elevation of project showing
underground landfill
Ink and wash on paper, 8" × 17"*



MELTING CANDLESTICK

SITE J.W. 1986

*Melting Candlestick, 1986: Variation of melting silver column
Ink and wash on paper, 14" x 17"*

P R O J E C T S

BEST INDETERMINATE FACADE SHOWROOM

Houston, Texas

1975

Best Products Co., Inc. is the nation's largest catalogue showroom merchandiser. In 1972, Best commissioned SITE to develop a series of special showrooms, each a unique work of art related to its environment, in various locations throughout the United States. SITE invariably starts with a simple rectangular enclosure using a minimum of walls and space divisions. From both a philosophical and a functional standpoint, it is important to retain the typology of a standard commercial strip facility. This minimal articulation allows the building to serve as a frame of reference for the exploration of ideas outside of formal content. It also offers the occupants of SITE structures the maximum free and organic use of the spaces.

The Indeterminate Facade Showroom is the visual inversion of a standard catalogue merchandising structure located on a typical commercial strip. This is achieved by extending the brick veneer of the facade in a ragged profile beyond the logical edge of the roofline, resulting in the appearance of architecture arrested somewhere between construction and demolition. To intensify this ambiguity, a section of the central facade is fragmented, allowing a pile of waste bricks to spill over the top of the pedestrian canopy. Architecture here is regarded as a matrix for art ideas and as a "found object," or the "subject matter" of art. The building also serves as a means of social and psychological commentary on both retail architecture and consumer culture.



View of the facade from Kleckley Street



Detail of cascade of bricks

BEST CUTLER RIDGE SHOWROOM

Miami, Florida
1979

The Cutler Ridge Showroom is located on flat terrain flanked by railroad tracks on one side and a major highway on the other. This concept takes advantage of both the long-range view of the showroom from the road and the more intimate relationship between architecture and pedestrians. The facade is segmented into four successive reductions that, together, add up to its sum total. The first part is the central building. The second is the front facade of block veneer, situated about ten feet from the entrance. The third is extracted from the center of the second and incorporates the

pedestrian canopy. The fourth reduction includes the three main doorways. From certain views, these collective parts overlap visually in space and unify to create the appearance of a standard Best showroom facade. From other positions, when the fragments are disengaged from their context, the building appears to be part of a surreal landscape, recalling the architectural fragments of a Di Chirico or Magritte painting. This effect is emphasized by the sunlight and shadows of the Florida climate.



View of segmented facade



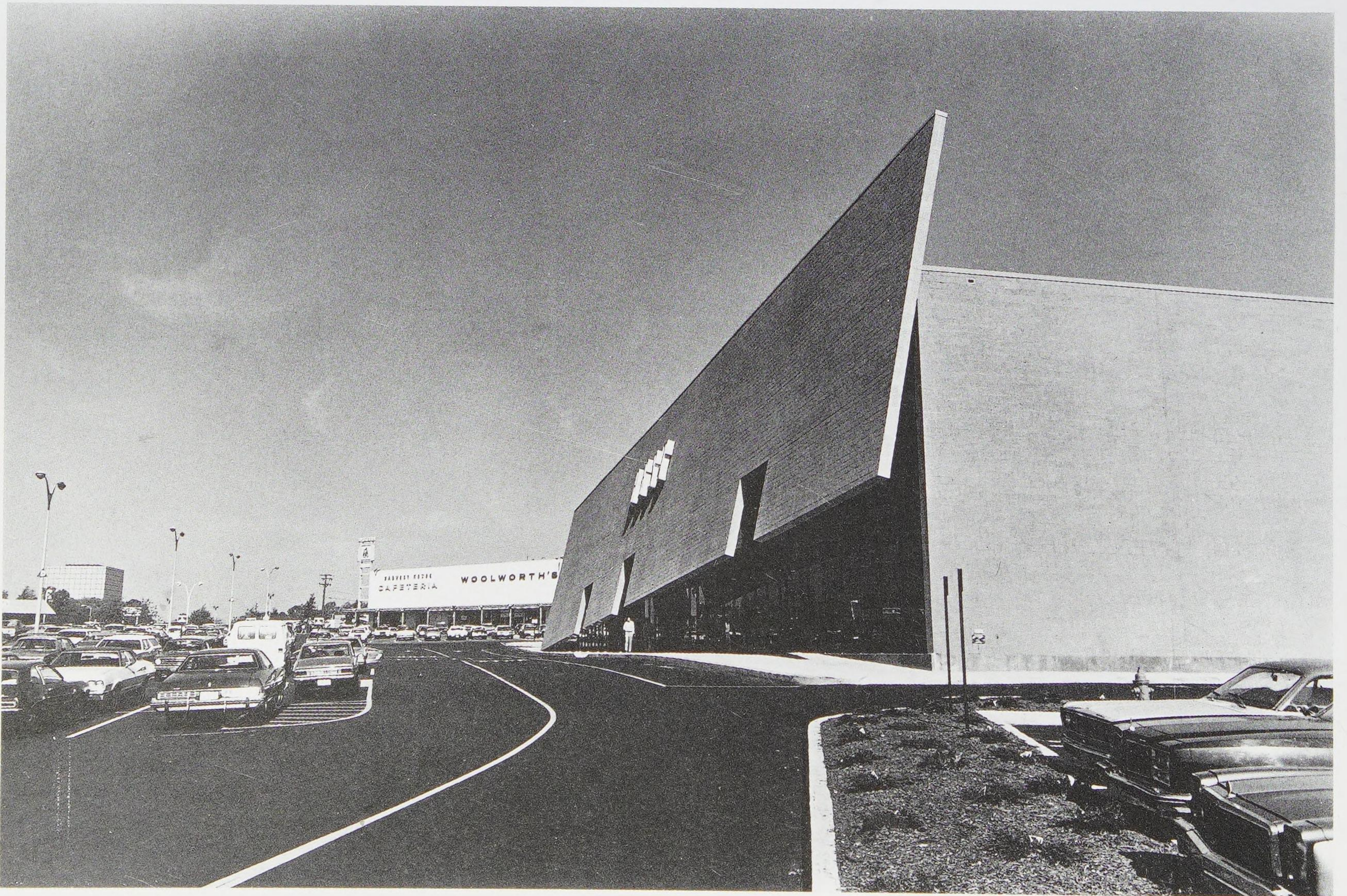
View of segmented facade at sunset

BEST TILT SHOWROOM

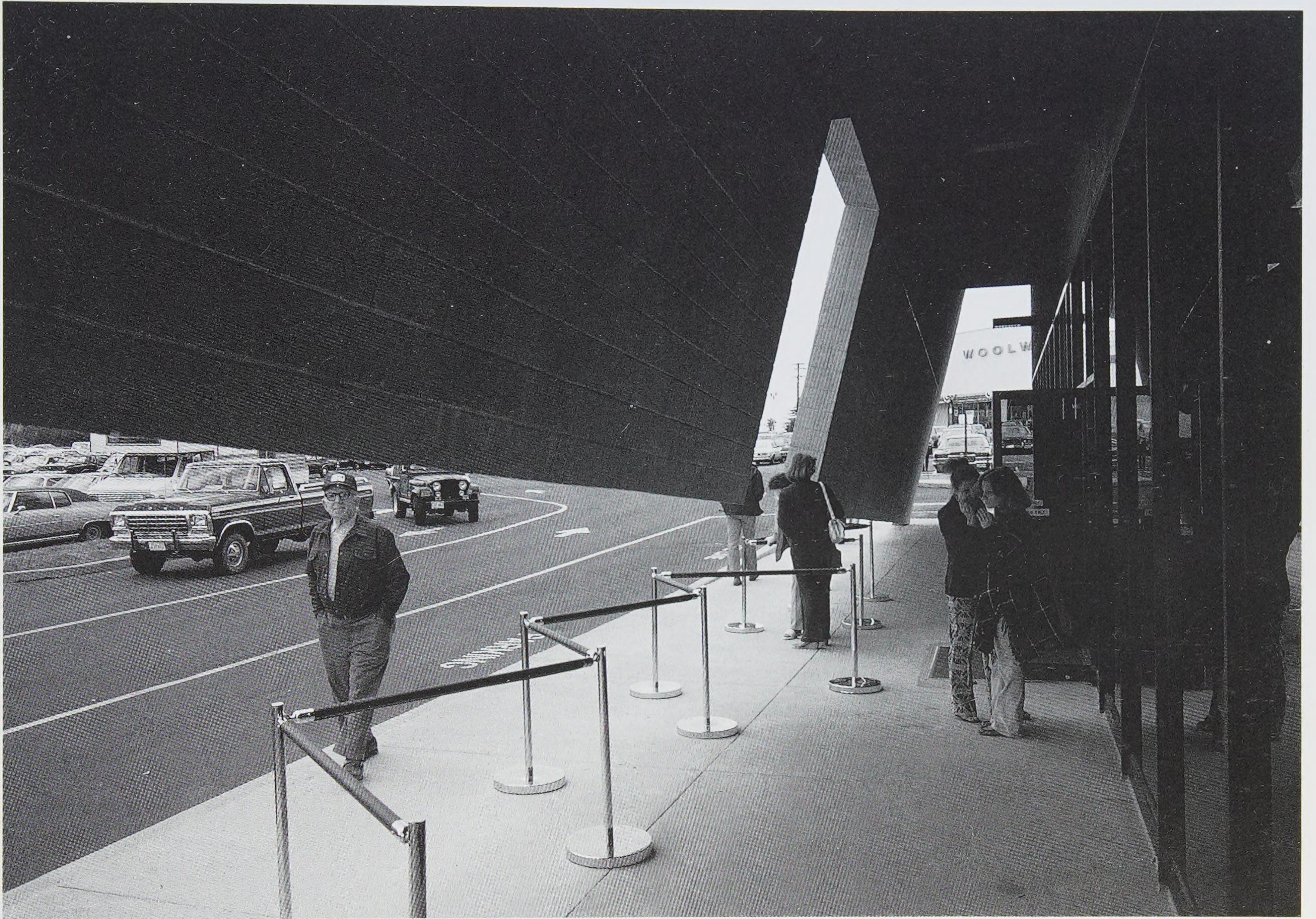
Towson, Maryland
1978

The Tilt Showroom is an inversion of the standard shopping-center structure and the architectural traditions of formalism and equilibrium. The facade of this showroom is a casually tilted plane in masonry block, developed as a response to existing physical and psychological circumstances. For example, the Towson site is a U-shaped retail mall composed of rigidly vertical and horizontal elements, and the injection

of a tilted wall establishes a visual dialogue between the conventions of the other buildings and the precariousness of the Best Products facade. The building is ~~also~~ a commentary on modern architecture's obsession with form as an expression of function. In this case, the function is not expressed, but simply revealed by lifting up one corner of the usual impediment between outside and inside.



View of facade from parking lot



View from under tilted wall

BEST NOTCH SHOWROOM

Sacramento, California

1977

The Notch Showroom represents a further exploration of SITE's interest in an architectural iconography of fragmentation and subtraction. In this Sacramento facility, as in the Houston Indeterminate Facade Showroom, the basic commercial building prototype is unchanged; thus architecture is treated as the subject matter or raw material for art, instead of the objective of a design process. However, whereas the fragmentation of the Indeterminate Facade uses additions as reductions, the Notch Showroom uses reductions as additions. The building is penetrated by a 14-foot-high, raw-edged notch that serves as a main entryway. The 45-ton

wedge extracted from this gap is mechanized and mounted on a rail system that allows it to move a distance of 40 feet to open and close the showroom. A commentary on the integration of art and architecture, the project can be interpreted as a sculptural monument (when the notch element is separated) and as a standard commercial building with a suspicious fissure (when the gap is closed). The Notch Showroom suggests this integration by retaining the biographical evidence of a *disintegration*, which then establishes a new relationship between art and architecture.



General view from parking lot



Notch section open for entry



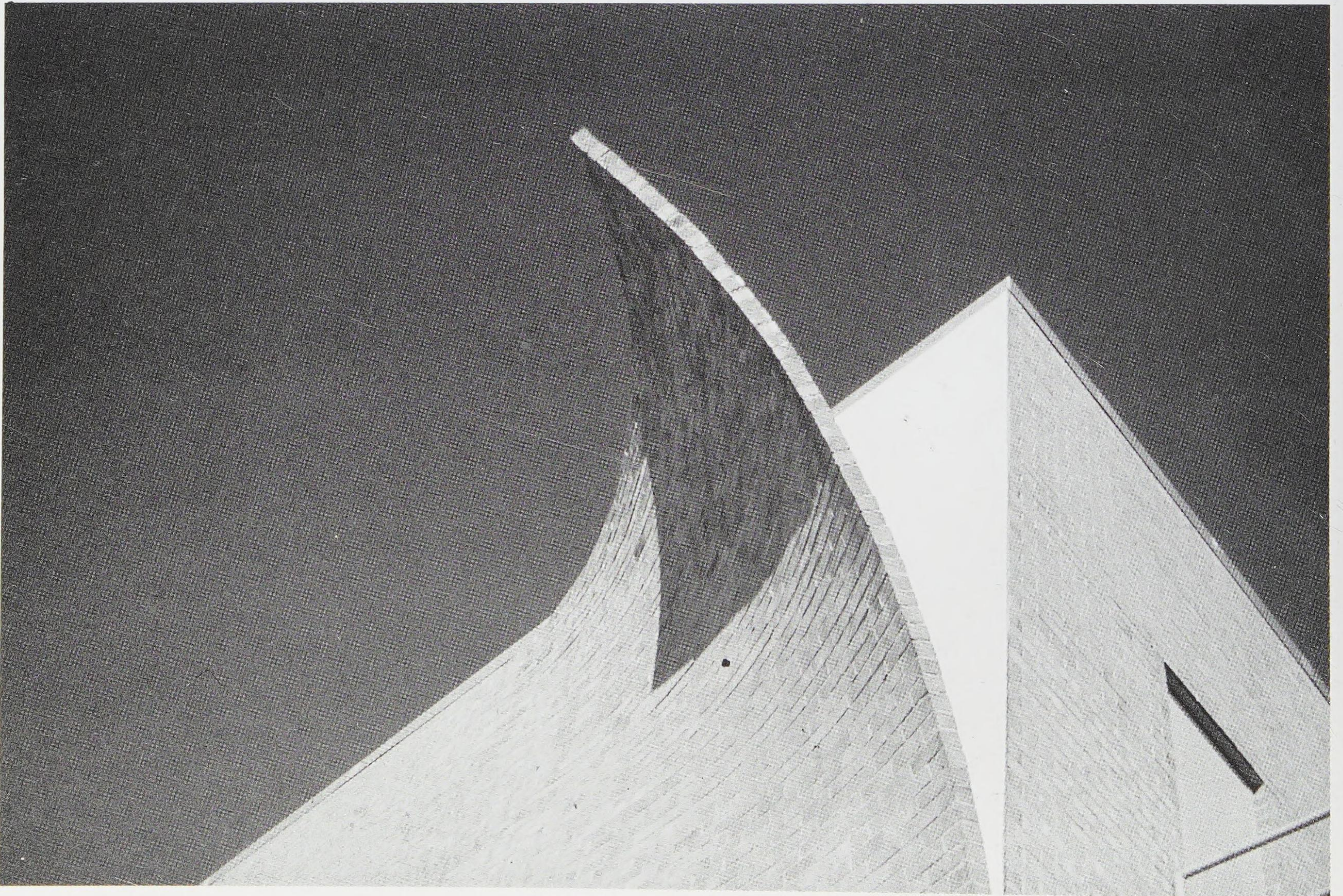
Notch section beginning to move on opening day

BEST PEELING PROJECT

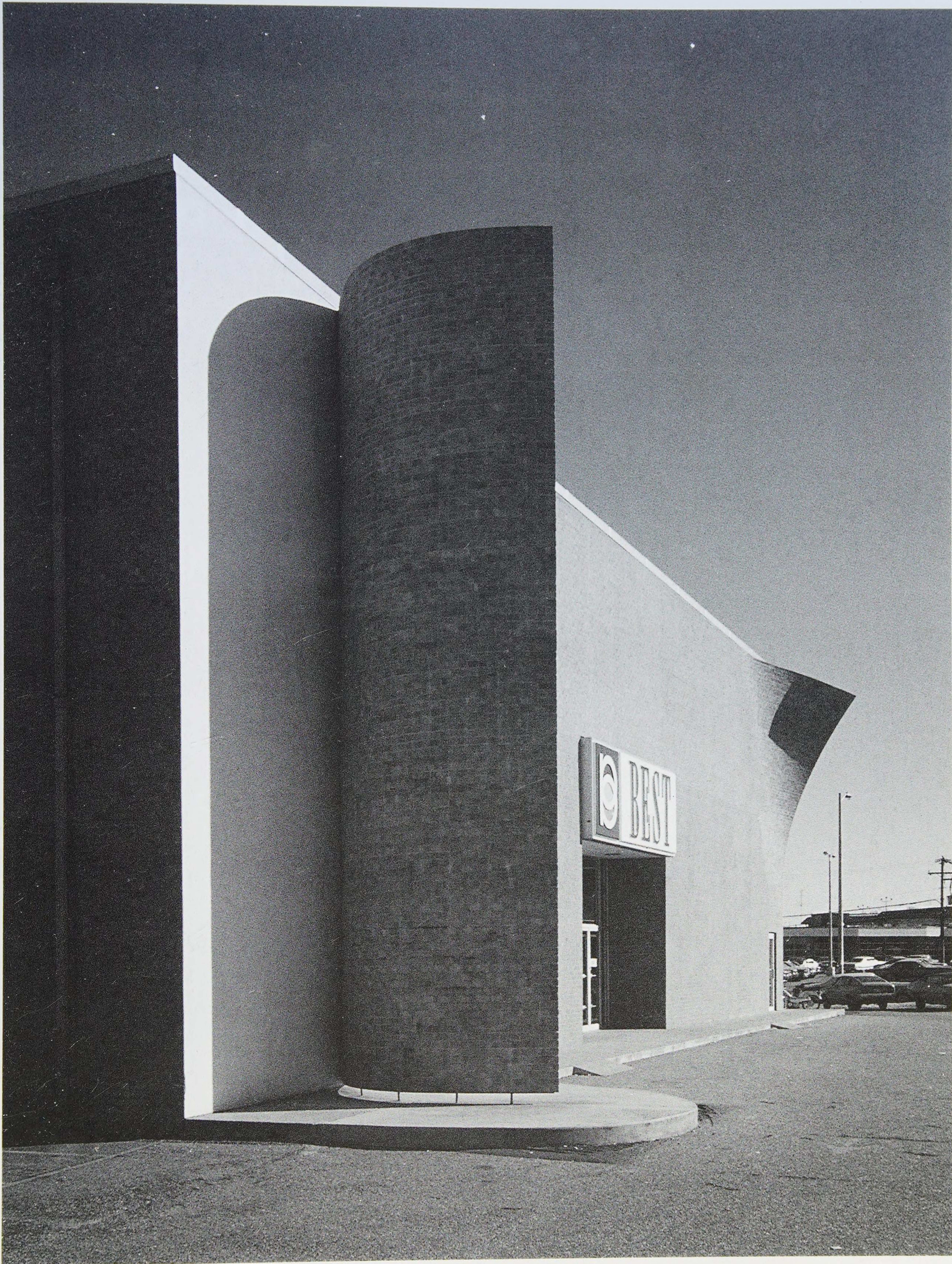
Richmond, Virginia
1972

The Peeling Project utilizes the facade of an existing building. Certain portions of the brick veneer are peeled away and extended precariously into space (achieved by the use of Sarabond adhesive mortar), revealing the cement under-
facing and producing the effect of architecture in a state of tentativeness and instability. By using inherent materials and

the basic structure of the building, the communicative level of this concept depends upon the juxtaposition of routine utility with visual ambiguity. It also suggests new alternatives for the use of visual art in the context of architecture for the commercial strip.



Detail of peeling brick corner



General view of peeling facade

BEST HIALEAH SHOWROOM

Hialeah, Florida
1979

The architecture of SITE is usually developed as an extension of the sociological, psychological, and physical characteristics of a particular context. In the case of the Hialeah Showroom, emphasis is on the relation of the building to the roadway and to the natural environment of Florida. The entire facade of the structure represents a microcosm of the surrounding landscape, including water, vegetation, sand, earth, and rock. This is accomplished by enclosing the facade in a wall of glass. The transparent skin supports a continuous

waterfall from the roof level and contains the landscape elements. The result is a kind of living iconography. In contrast to the traditional and ultimately static use of sculpture and decorative accessories on buildings, the imagery of the Hialeah Showroom is both mutable and evolutionary. From a visual standpoint, the blurred impressions of the signage and plant life, seen through the refraction of the water, emphasize the kinetic experience associated with viewing the environment from a moving vehicle.



General view of water wall and vegetation



Detail of water wall

BEST FOREST BUILDING

Richmond, Virginia
1980

Located in a densely wooded suburban site, this building is sited and constructed so as not to destroy existing vegetation. The forest is allowed to actually penetrate and envelop the

showroom. This phenomenon is heightened by the surrounding asphalt, giving the appearance of architecture invaded and consumed by nature.



General view of segmented structure and invading forest



View of forest penetration between cutaway facade sections



Night view of building with Christmas lights



View of forest and pedestrian walkway



General view of vegetation between building segments

BEST PARKING LOT SHOWROOM

Undetermined site

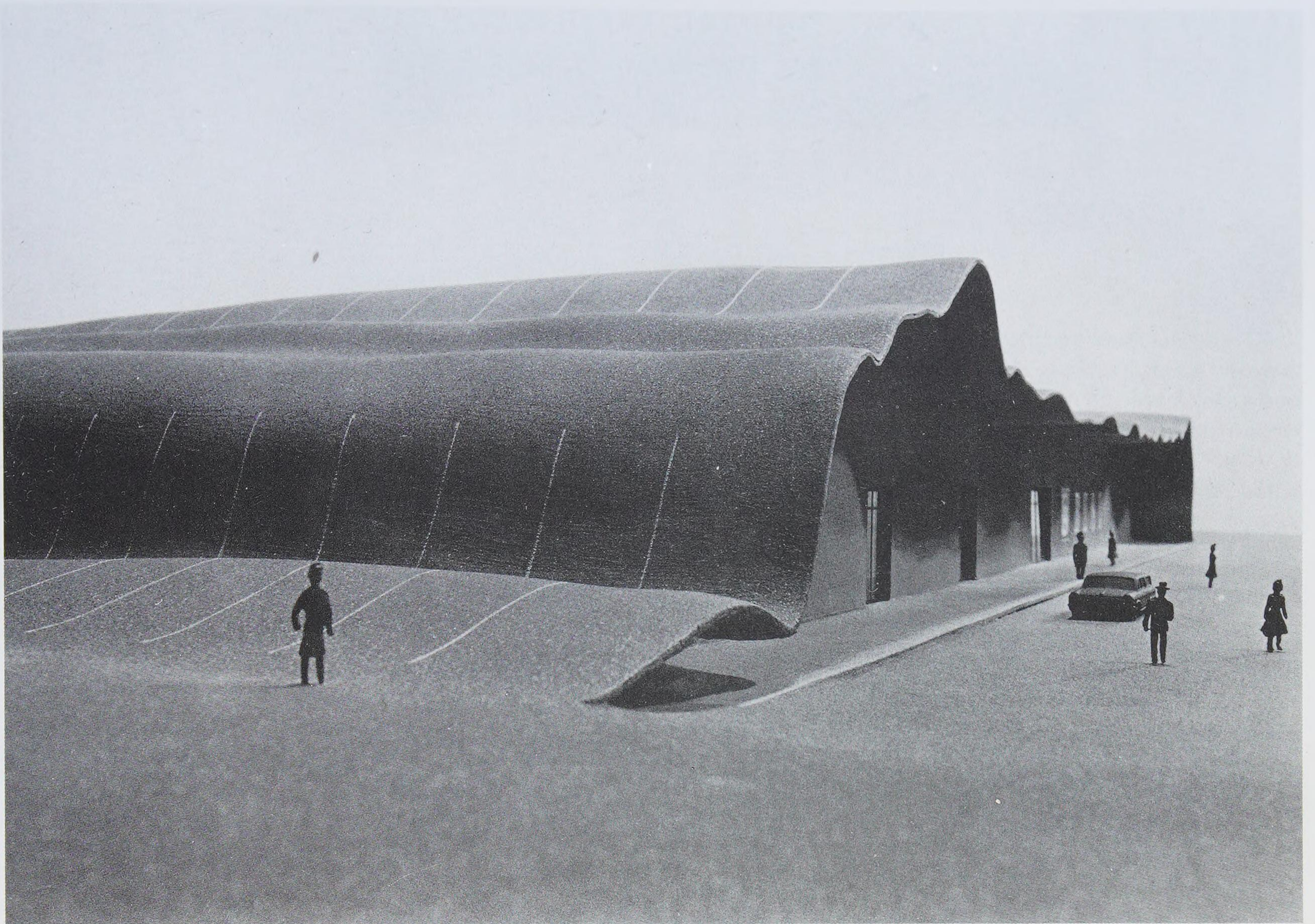
1976

The Parking Lot Showroom rolls the central section of a large area of asphalt paving over the building as an inversion of the traditional relationship between architecture and its site. The showroom appears as though buried under an undulating blanket of pavement, suggestive of a building consumed by its environment. This ambiguity is further emphasized by the continuation of the parking-space lines over the top of the structure. Consistent with other SITE projects

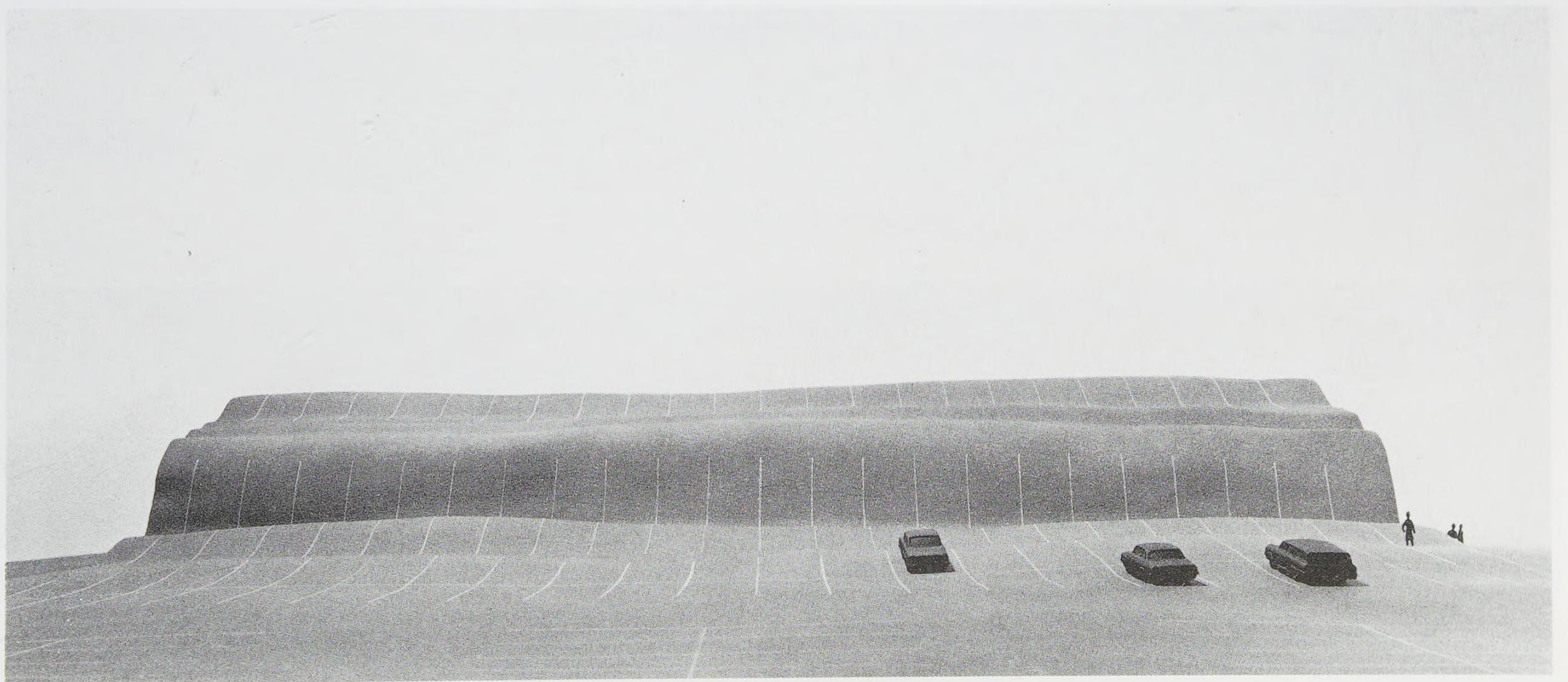
for Best Products, this concept utilizes inherent materials and building types associated with the commercial strip. In this case, two universal ingredients, the parking lot and the retail warehouse, are combined to achieve other levels of meaning. In a sense this structure implies the elimination of architecture altogether, but as a point of departure for new explorations concerning the interaction of building with context, not as a final requiem.



Sketch of project



Detail of model



Model showing transition from parking lot to showroom

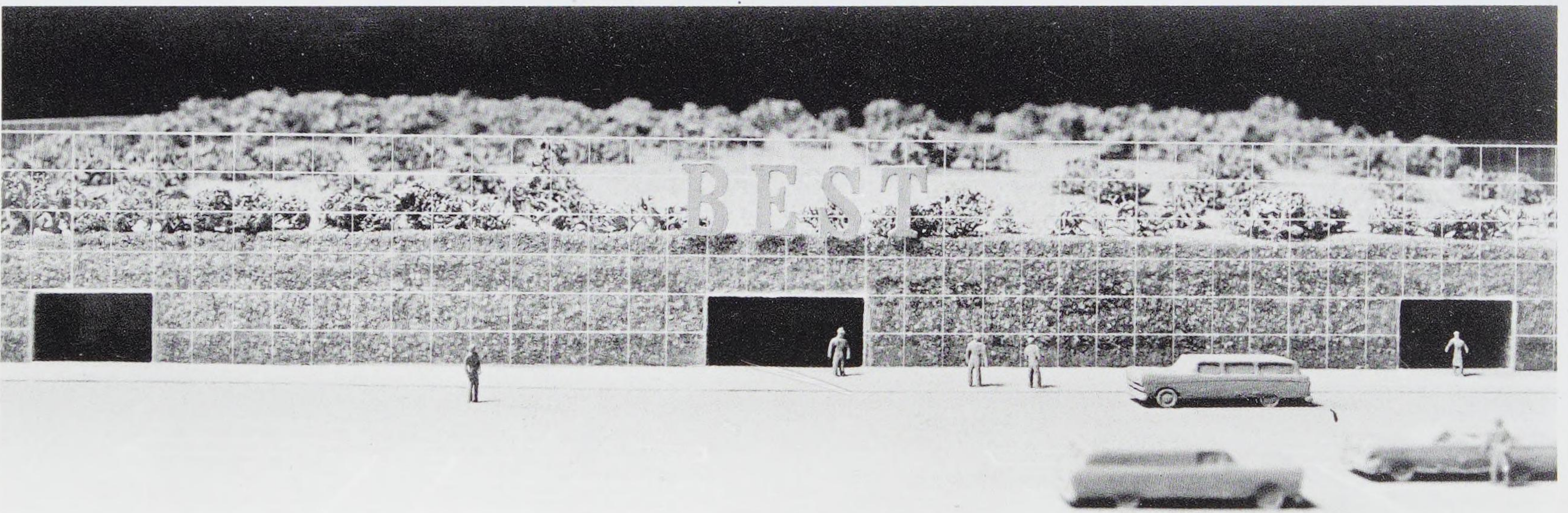
BEST TERRARIUM SHOWROOM

South San Francisco, California

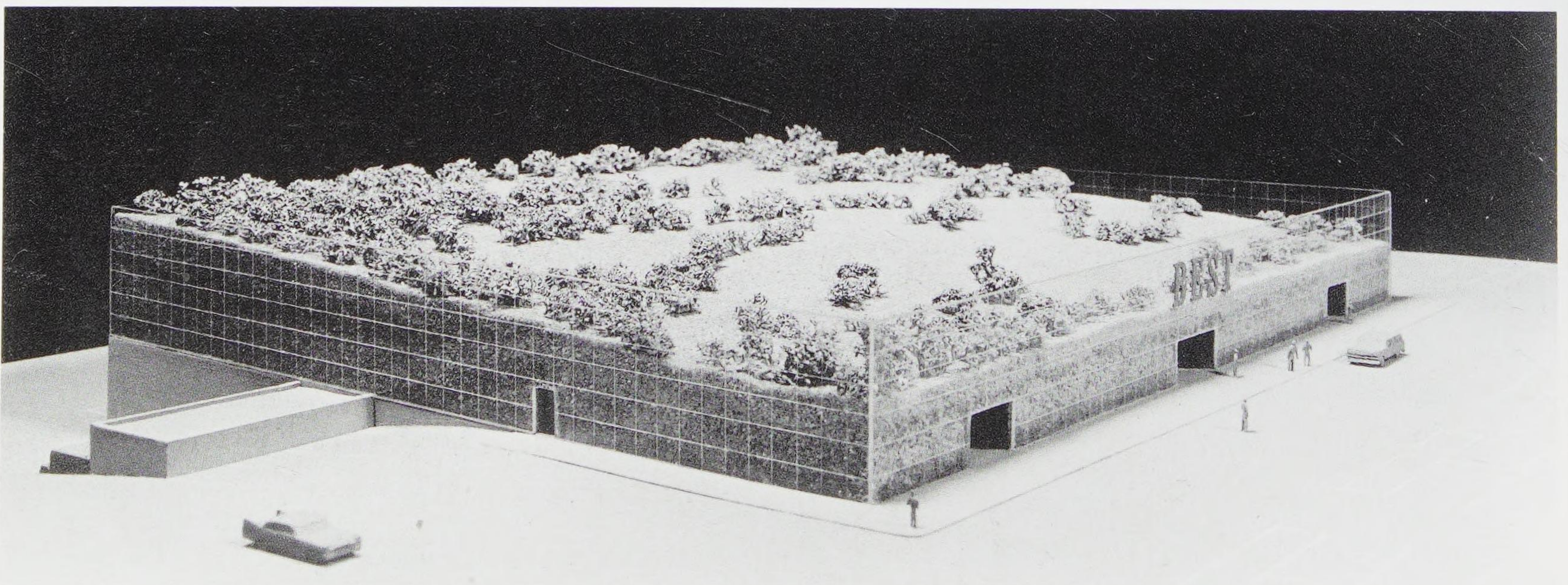
1978

The Terrarium Showroom is located on a highly visible plateau near a major highway and surrounded by mountainous landscape. A volume of earth excavated during foundation preparations became the iconography of the finished building. The basic walls are made of cement block, and the roof is radically inclined in a series of terraced elevations. A transparent “skin” of four-by-four-foot glass modules encloses the walls, allowing an eight-inch gap between glass and masonry. The negative space is filled with earth and

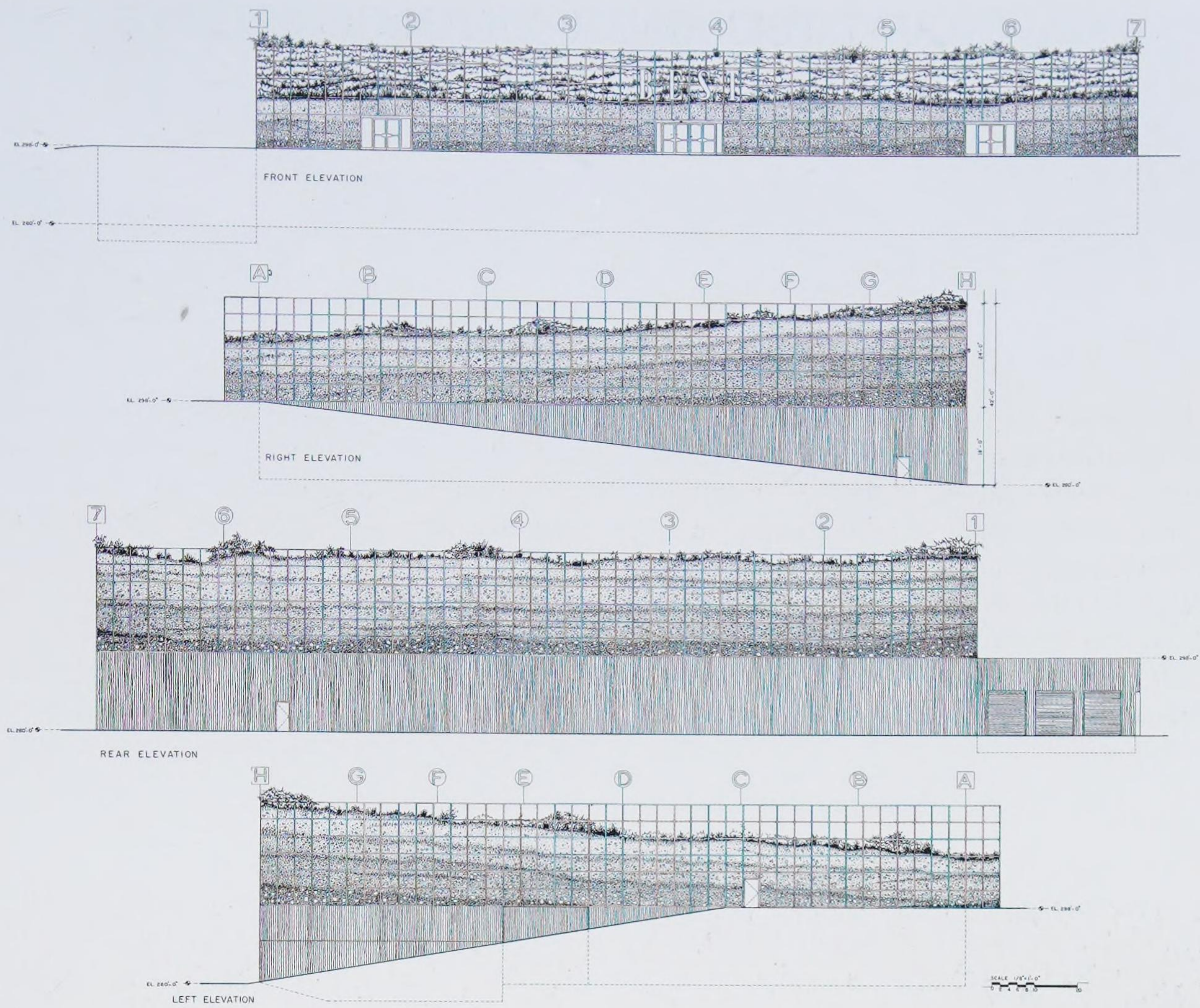
rock, approximating the actual terrain strata of the area, and the entire roof is covered with regional vegetation. The general effect of the building is similar to that of a natural history museum terrarium, serving as a biographical record of its own evolution and as an encapsulated geological history of the California region. It is anticipated that as small plant life takes root in the walls, the building will acquire a mutable iconography and the community will be able to watch the structure "grow."



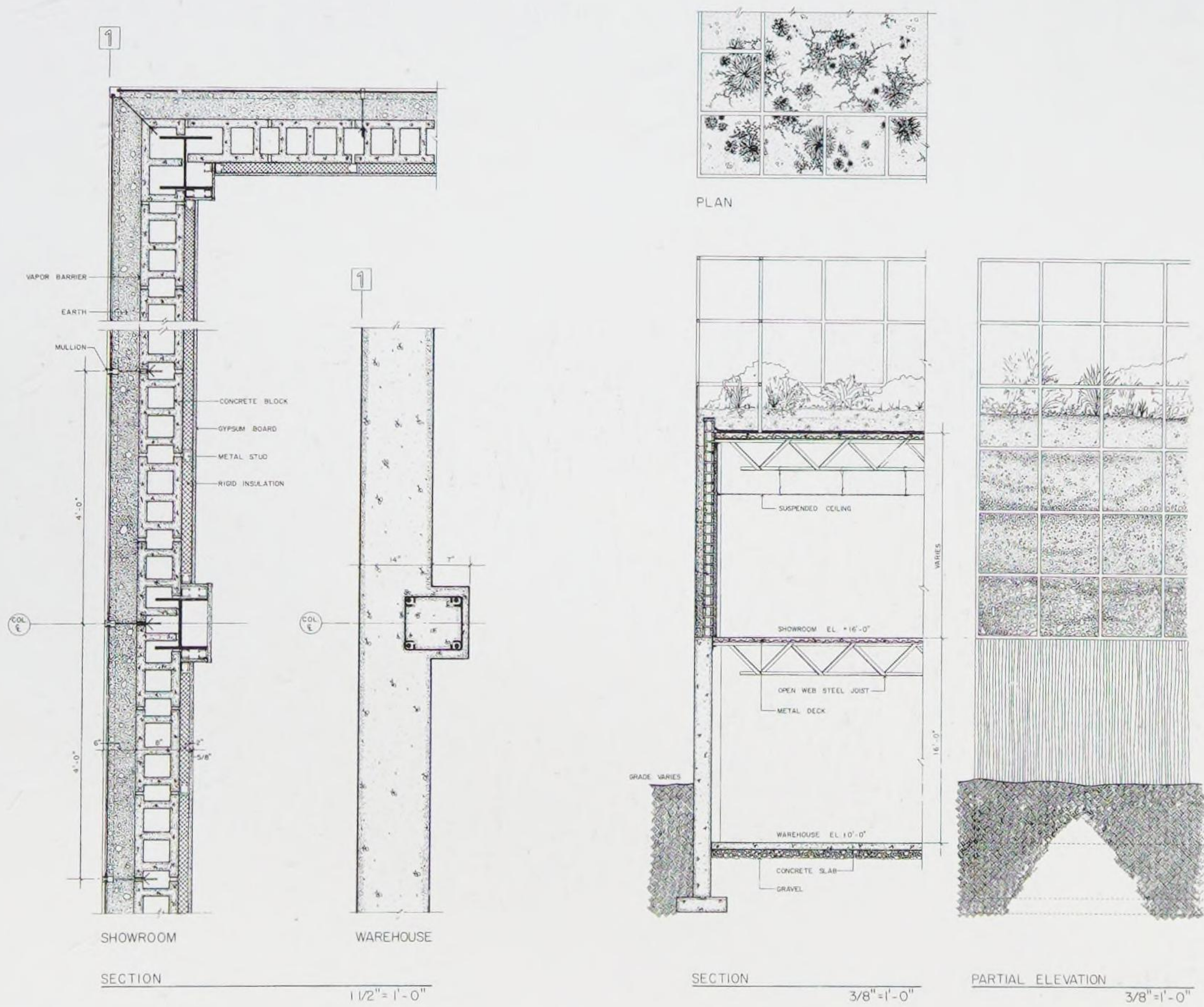
Model showing terrarium facade



Model



Elevations showing terrarium walls



Section of terrarium wall

MOLINO STUCKY VENICE BIENNALE PROJECT

Venice, Italy
1975

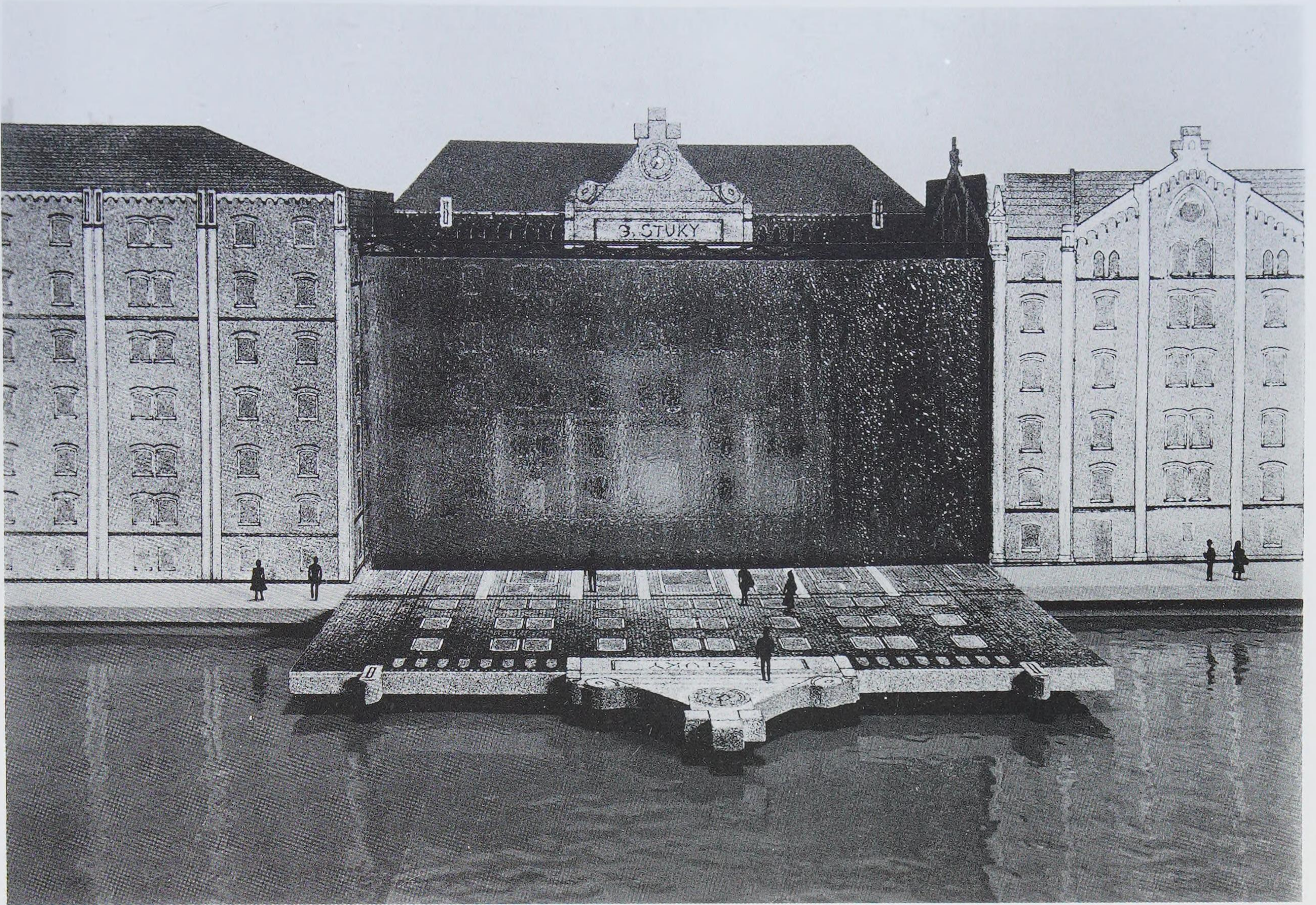
SITE developed a series of iconographic proposals for the abandoned Stucky Mills located on the island of Giudecca, in Venice, Italy, opposite the historic center. In directing the concerns of the Biennale toward the Molino Stucky, the municipality indicated a desire to focus attention on this neglected site with the ultimate purpose of revitalizing the area for housing, recreation, and student activities.

This project reverses the familiar relationship between the canals of Venice and the building facades, with the facade of the Molino Stucky becoming the horizontal ele-

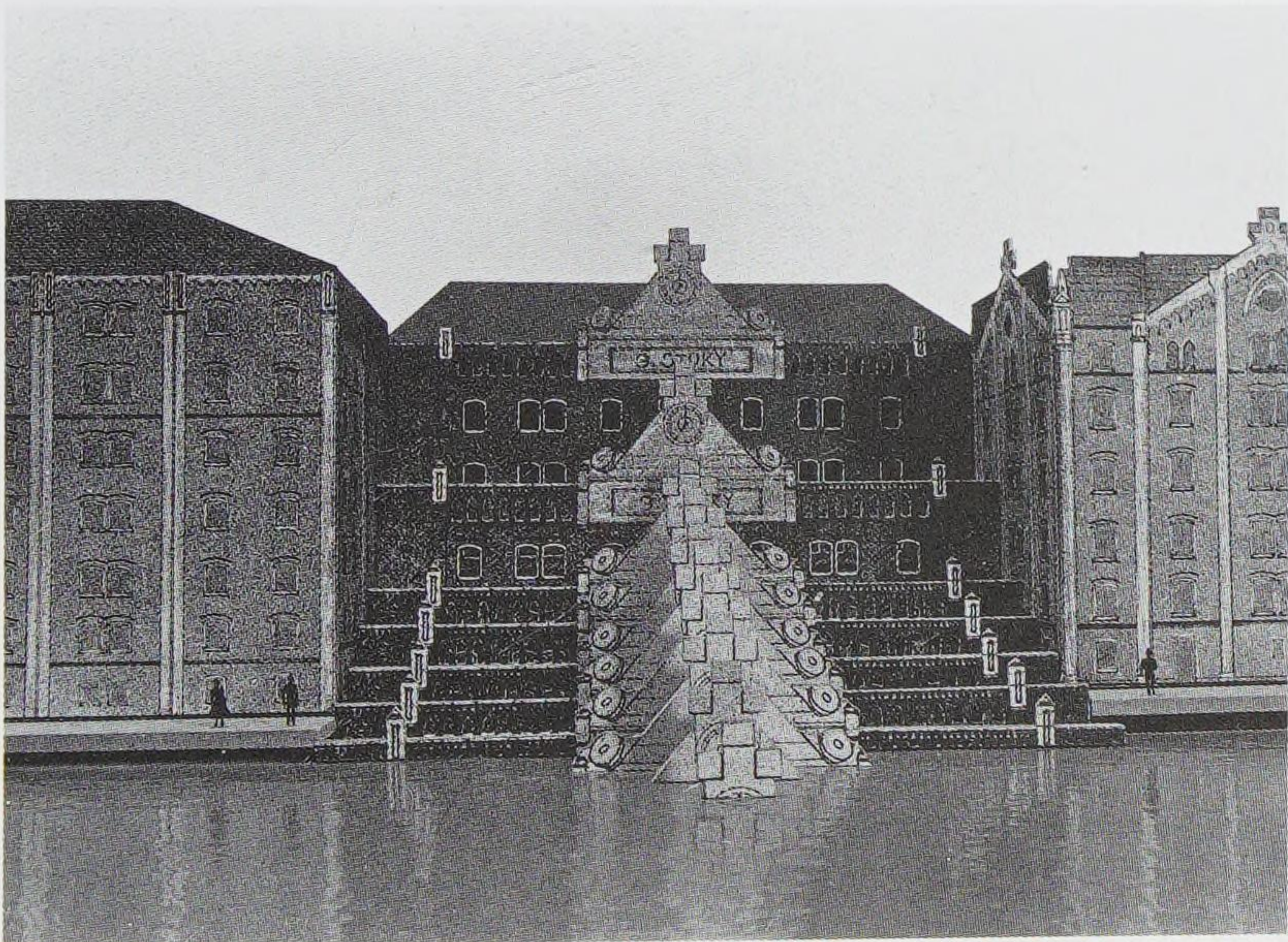
ment and the water becoming the facade. This juxtaposition is achieved by extending the promenade as an exact reproduction of the central section of the Molino and installing a plate-glass wall to bridge the gap between the two adjacent wings of the factory. A hydraulic sprinkler system is suspended on a steel space frame over this wall, allowing a continuous cascade of water to flow against the glass, creating the illusion of a transparent membrane made of water. This ephemeral facade is intended to stand in marked contrast to the traditional architectural imagery of the city.



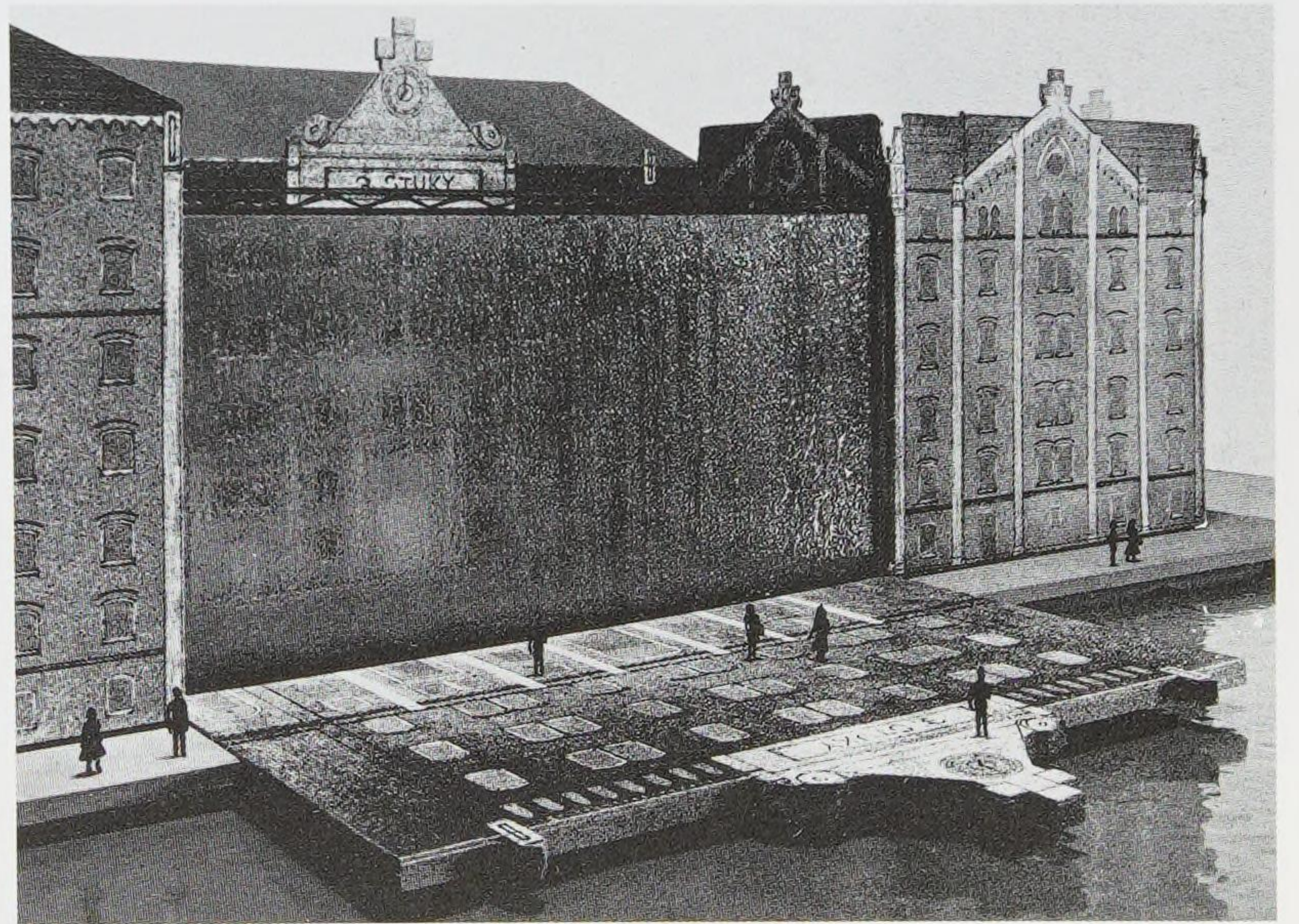
View of existing Molino Stucky in Venice



Model showing water wall and facade inversion



Model with sinking facade concept



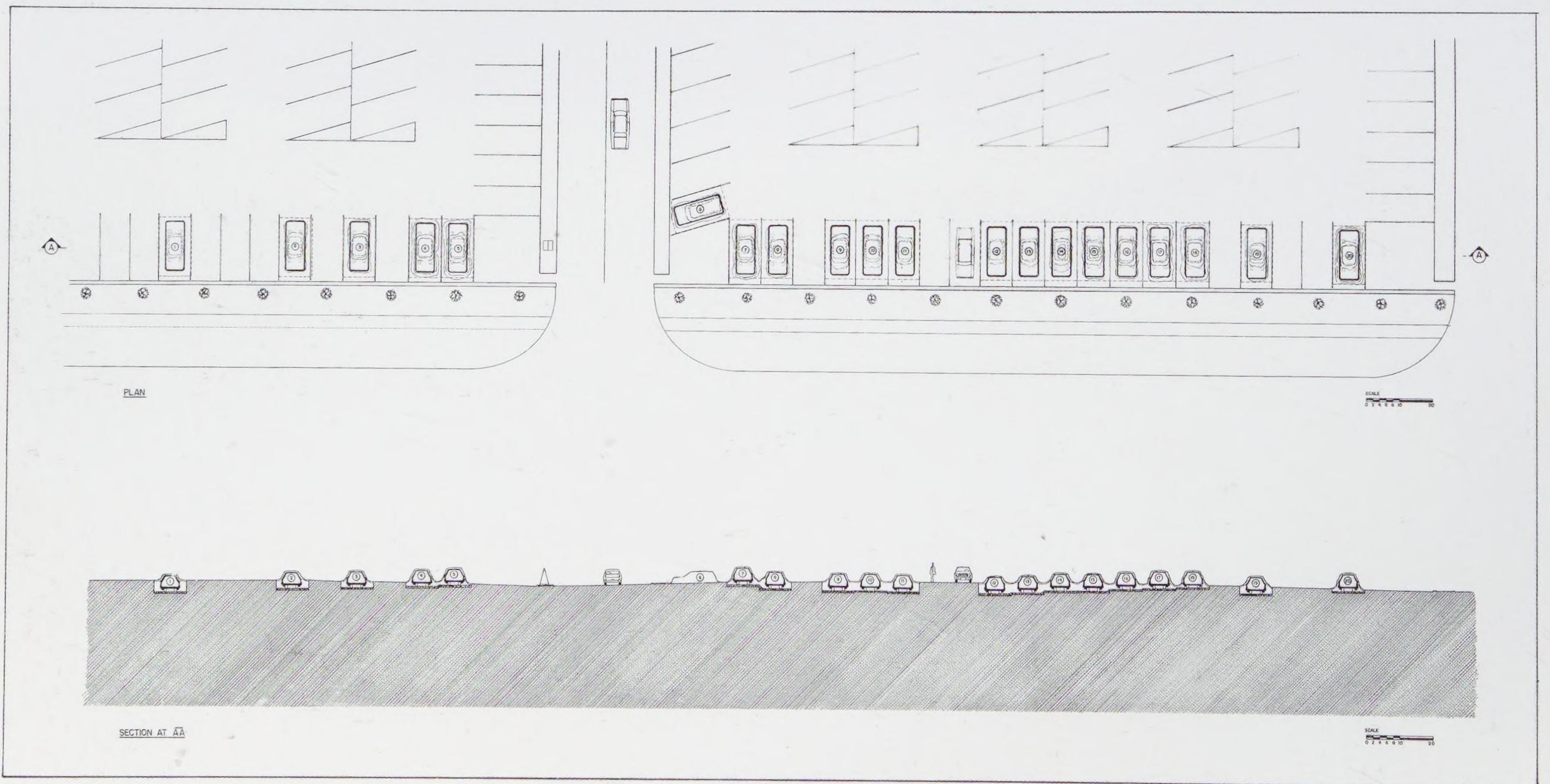
Model detail of water wall

GHOST PARKING LOT

Hamden, Connecticut
1978

The Ghost Parking Lot inverts the relationship between two standard ingredients of a typical suburban shopping plaza: automobiles and asphalt. Twenty automobiles are buried under the paving surface in varying degree, from full exposure of the body contours to complete envelopment. The concept deals with a number of factors characteristic of the American mobilized experience—the blurred vision of motion, the fetishism of the car, the indeterminacy of place and object—and utilizes them as the raw material for an art statement. The Ghost Parking Lot, consistent with SITE's view of public art, uses existing physical and psychological

circumstances in the development of a solution. In contrast to the conventional use of "object art" as a decorative accessory to buildings and public spaces, this project is neither "placed" nor "integrated" in any formal sense. Instead, it is part of its context by the inclusion of certain subconscious connections between shopping-center merchandising rituals and the mythology of the American automobile. Also, unlike public art conceived from the standpoint of private art, this project is site-specific: It cannot be isolated or exhibited apart from its intended environment.



Plan and elevation



Construction of project



Completed project with parked car



General view of project showing automobiles covered with asphalt



Open convertible encased in asphalt



View of buried Buick



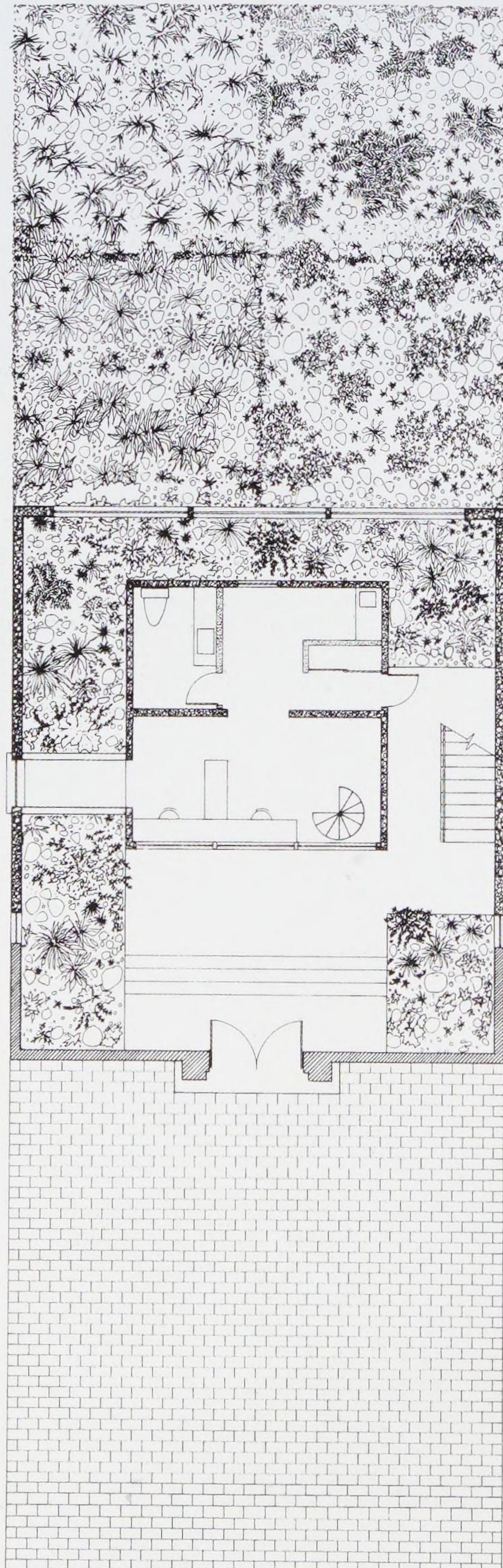
General view facing street

PERPETUAL SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION BANK

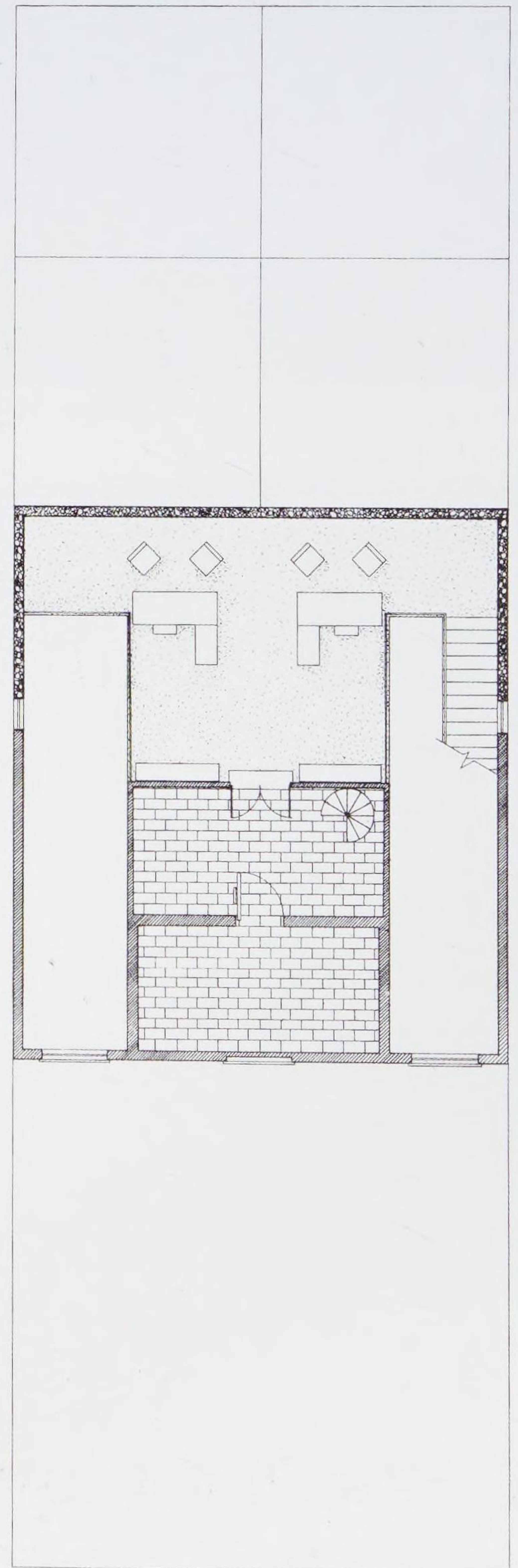
Various cities in South Dakota
1980

This project is for the development of a series of prototypes for regional banks that will provide a theme and variations, so that each branch facility can be adapted to environmental characteristics in various parts of South Dakota. The Perpetual Savings and Loan Association Bank deals with the theme of duality in every detail, exterior and interior. There

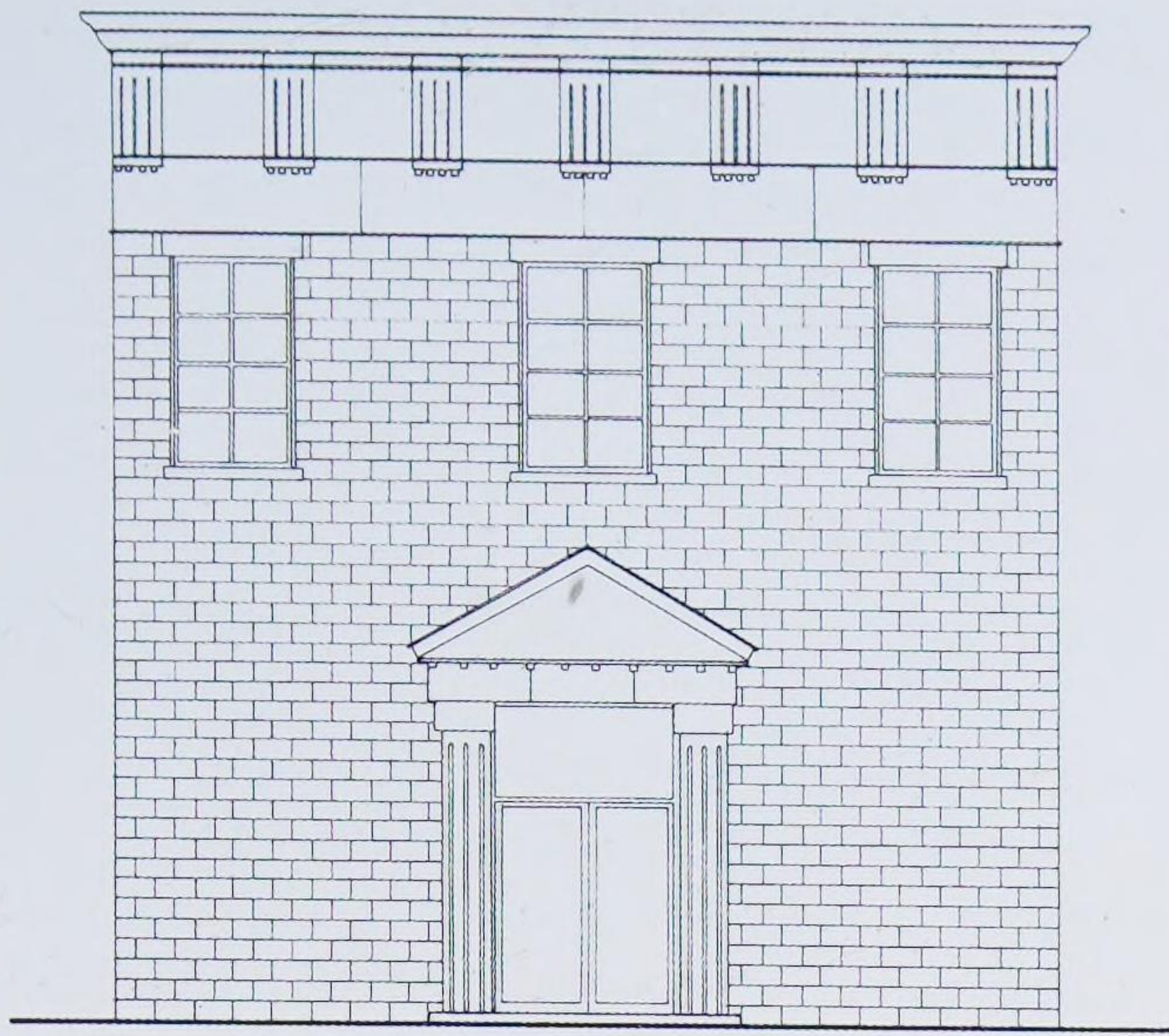
is a "secure" savings half, which draws on the Classical Greek Revival banks of the early West, and a "creative" loan counterpart, based on local materials and landscape. The physical configuration of the bank takes advantage of South Dakota's vast stretches of flatlands, offering an appropriate visual image that stands out clearly in its surroundings.



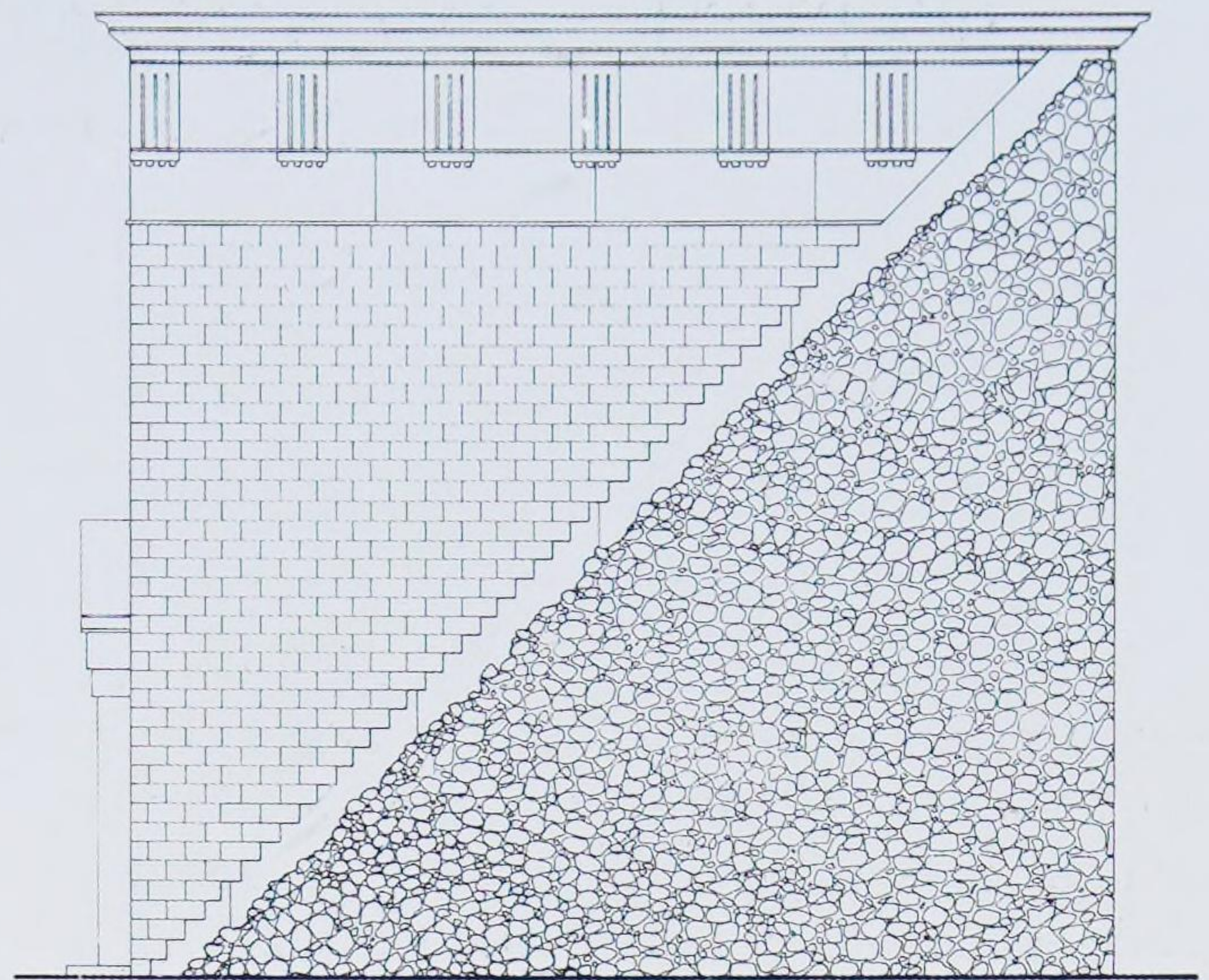
FIRST FLOOR PLAN



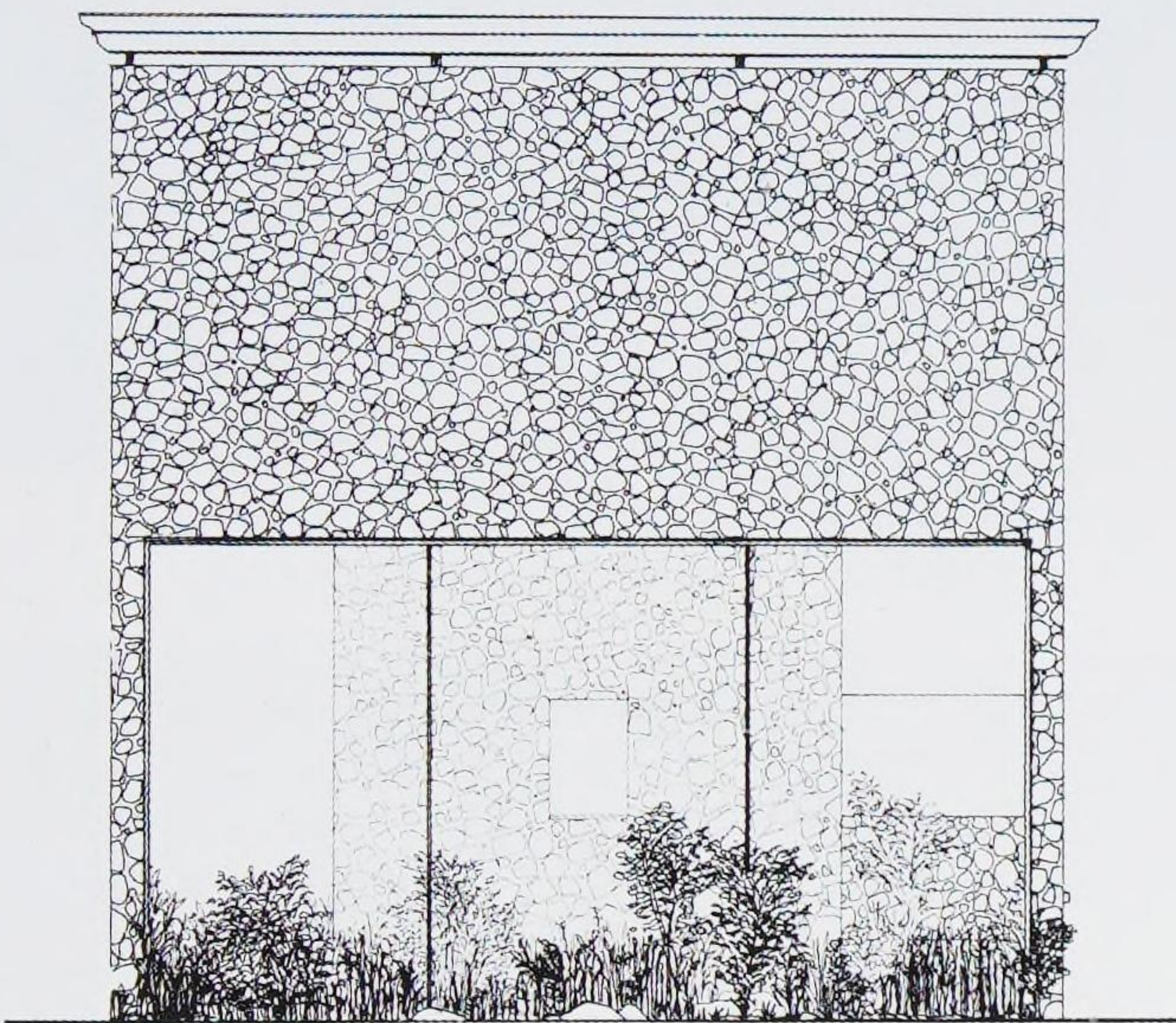
SECOND FLOOR PLAN



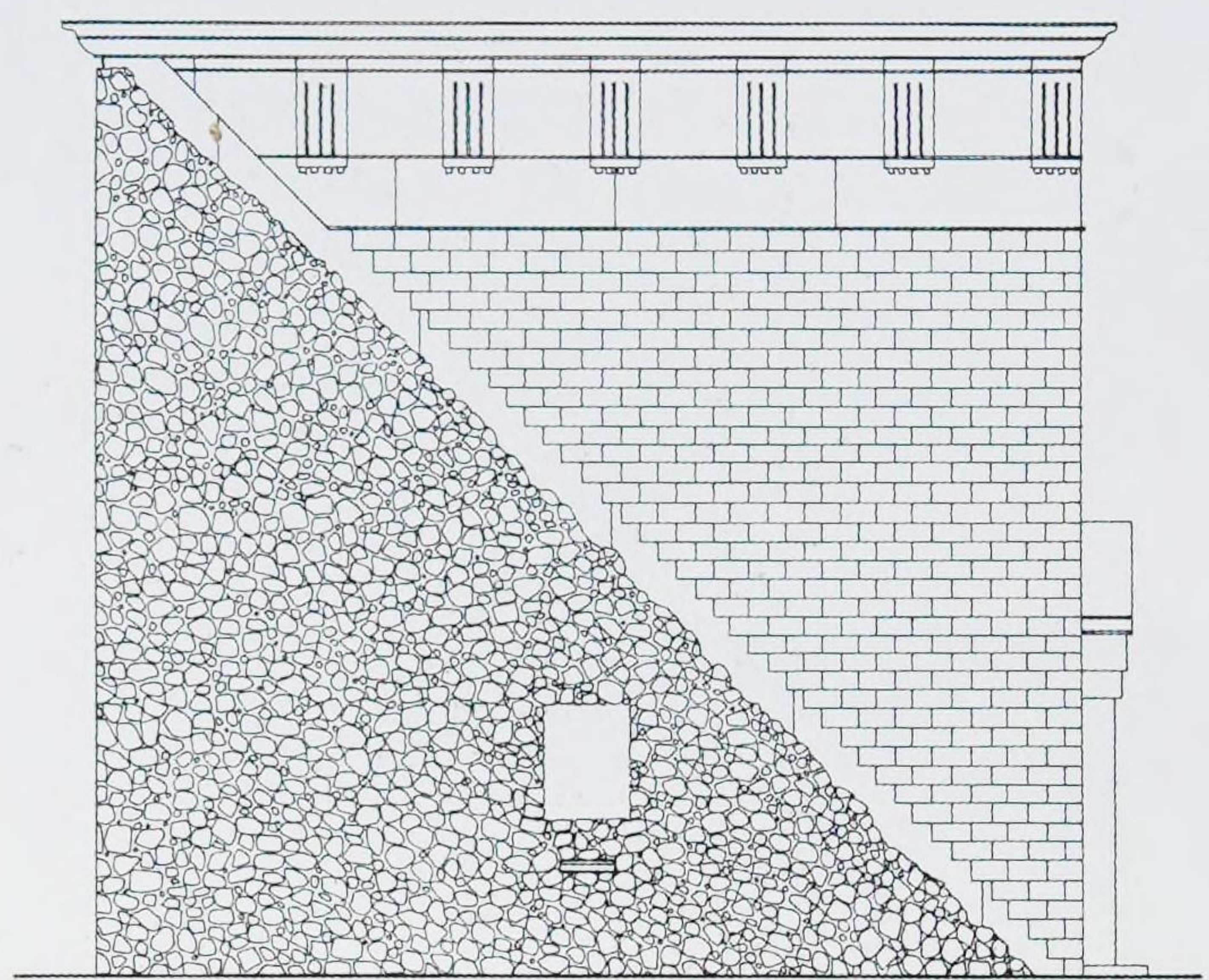
FRONT ELEVATION



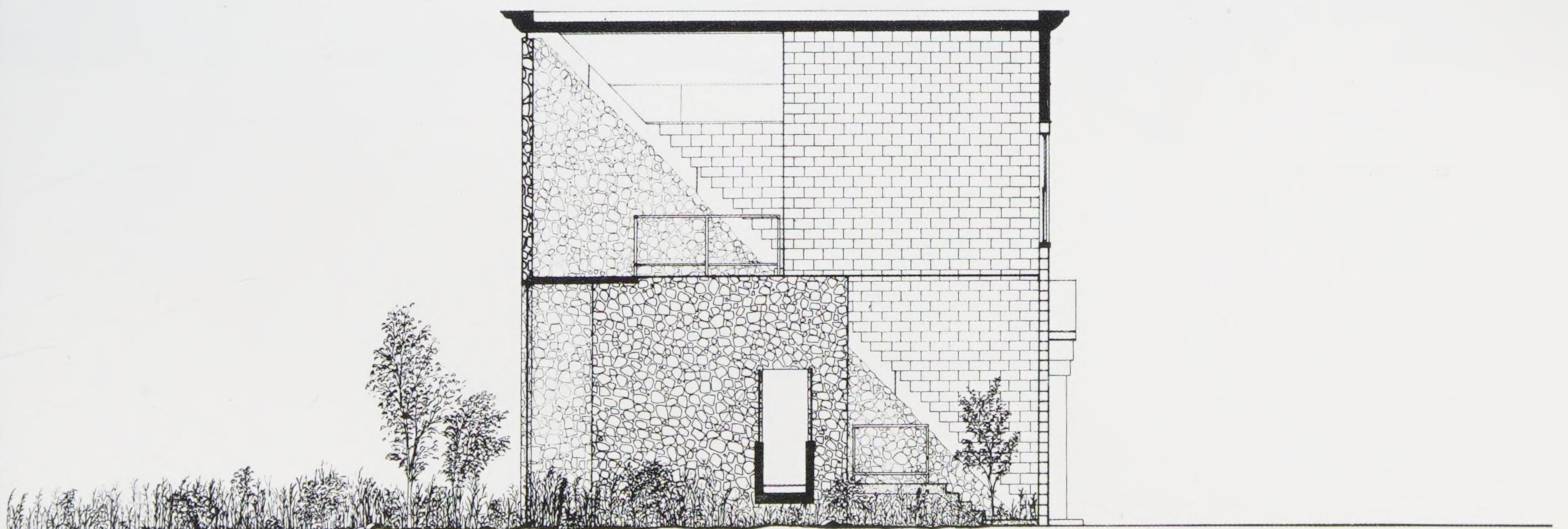
RIGHT ELEVATION



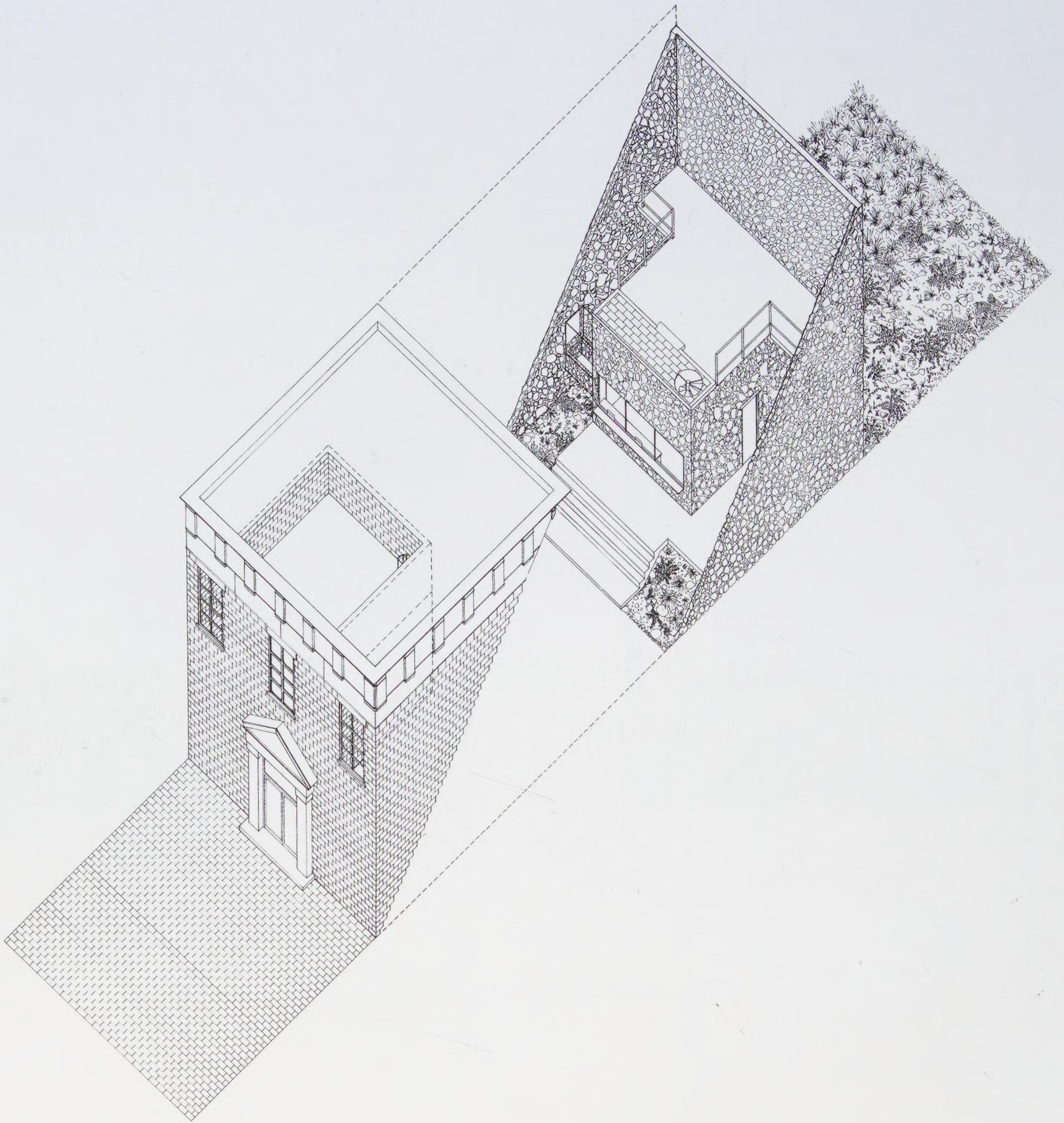
REAR ELEVATION



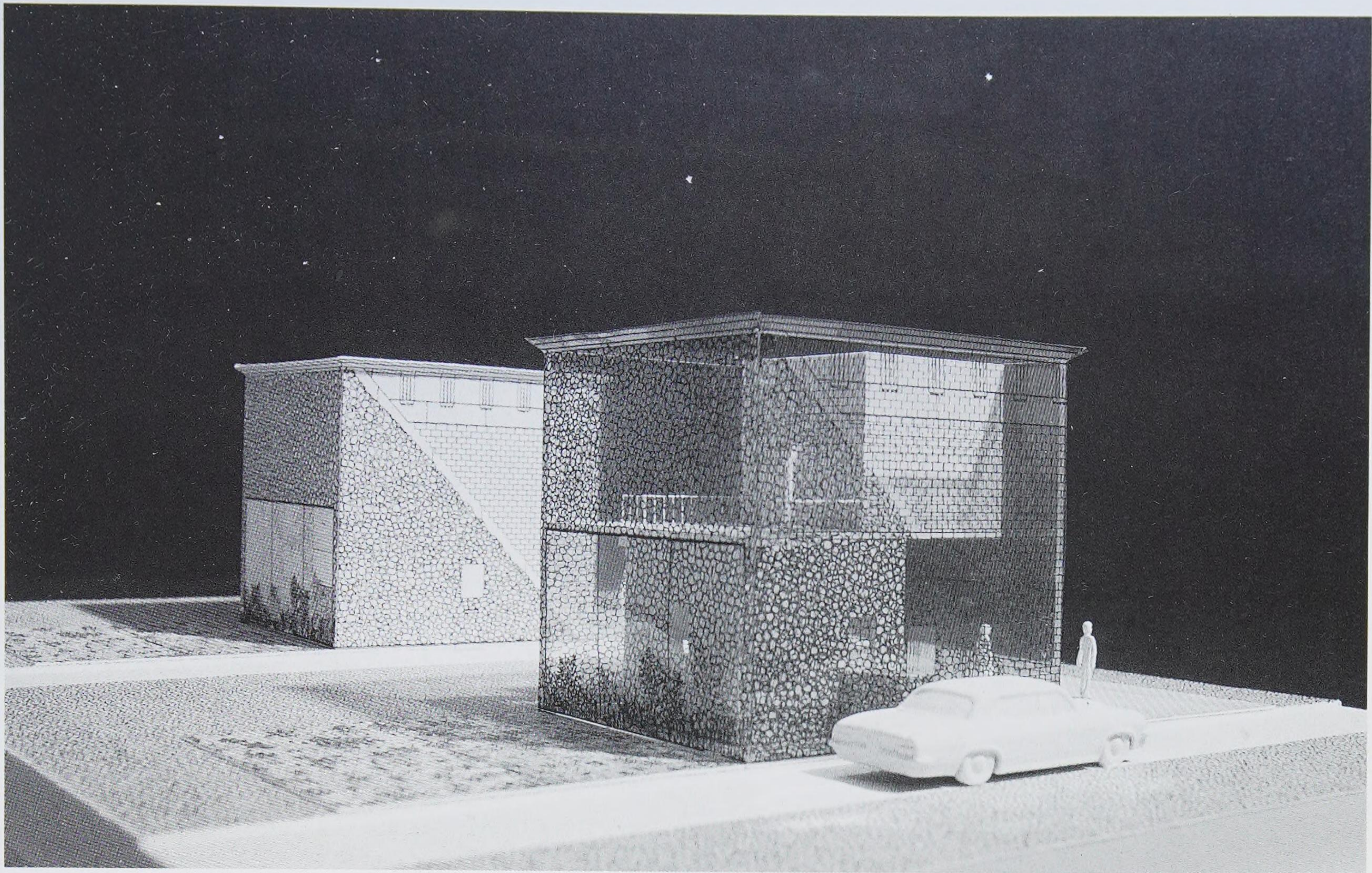
LEFT ELEVATION



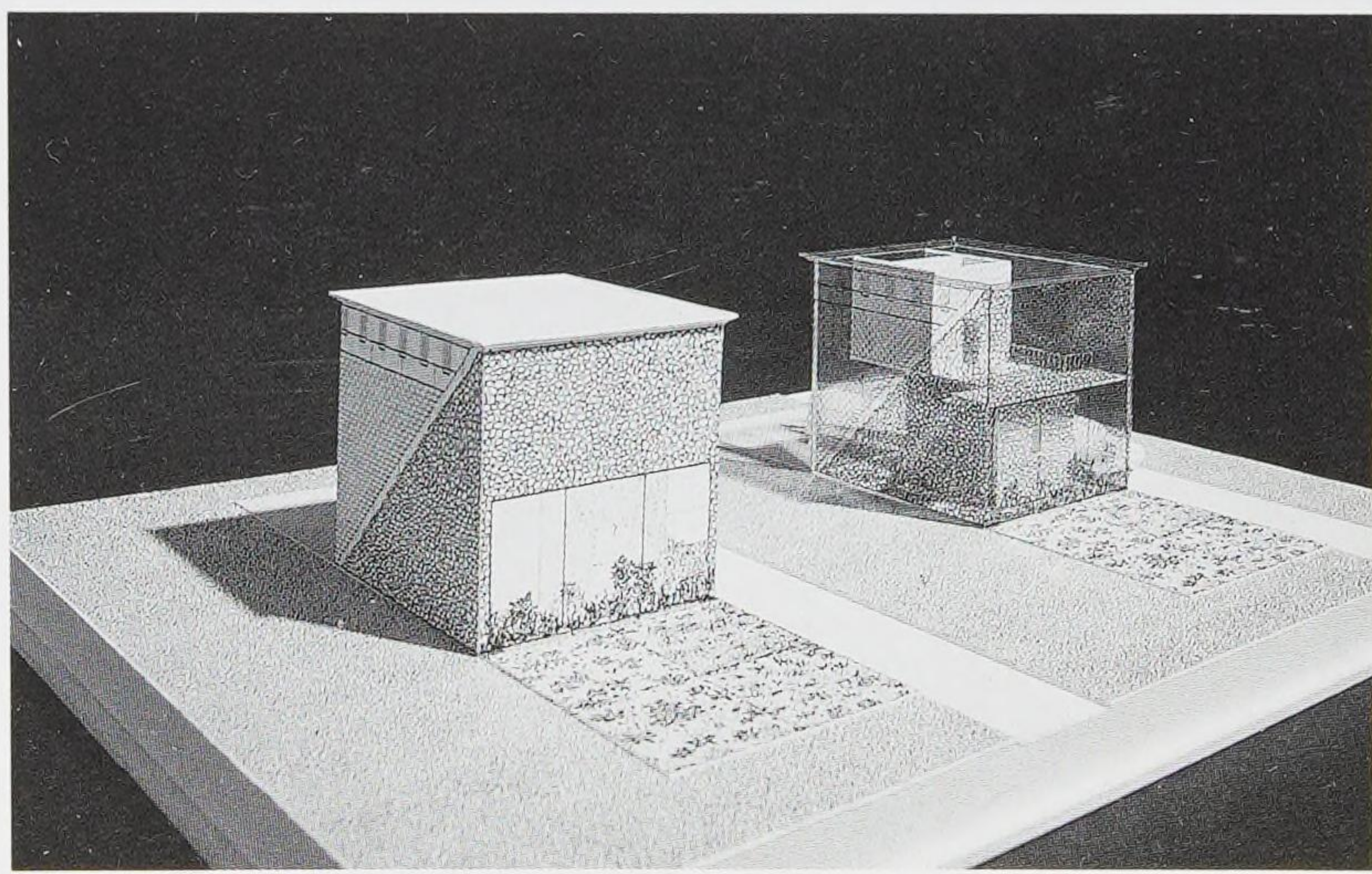
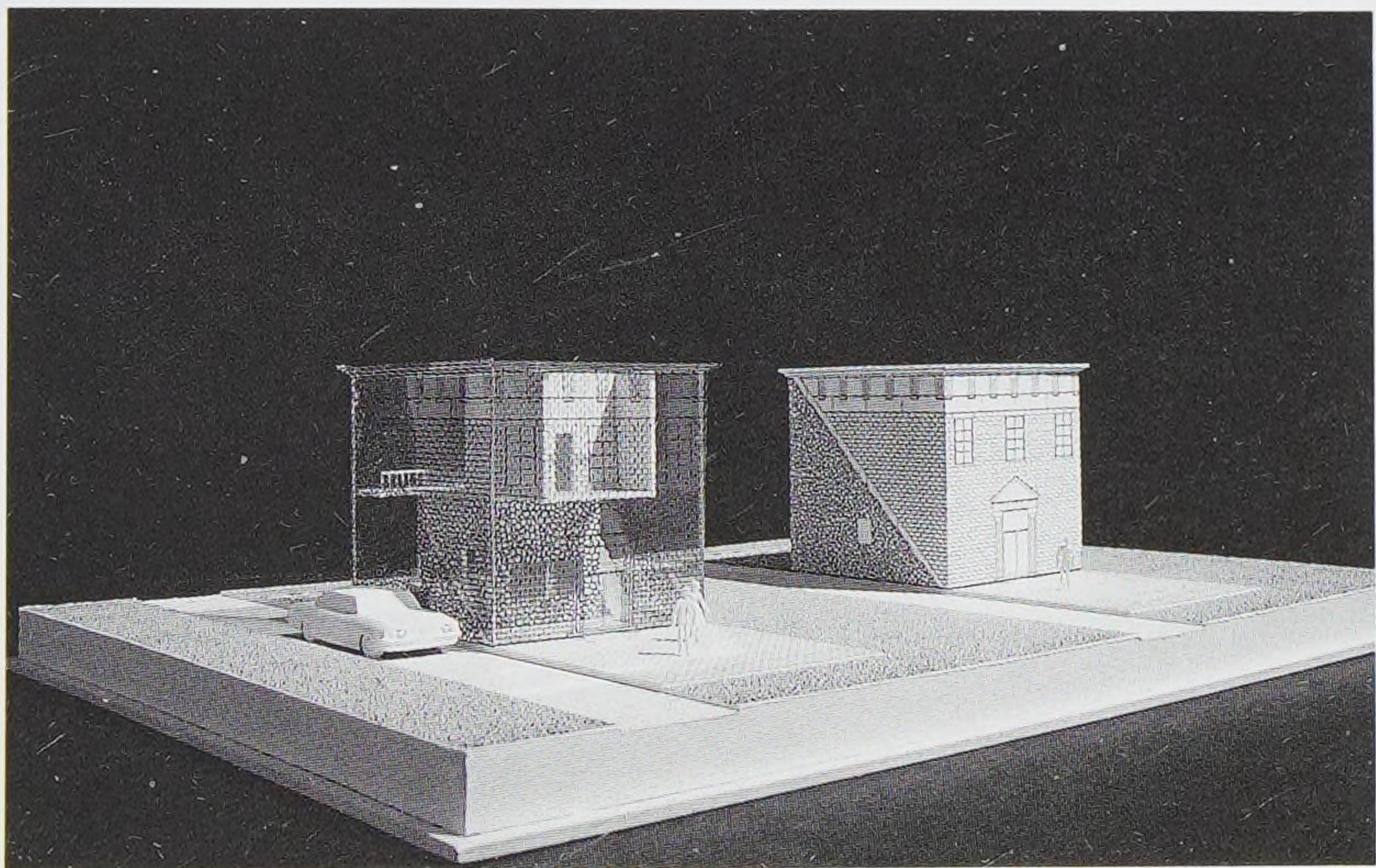
SECTION THROUGH TELLER'S BRIDGE



Axonometric view



Views of model showing inside/outside relationships

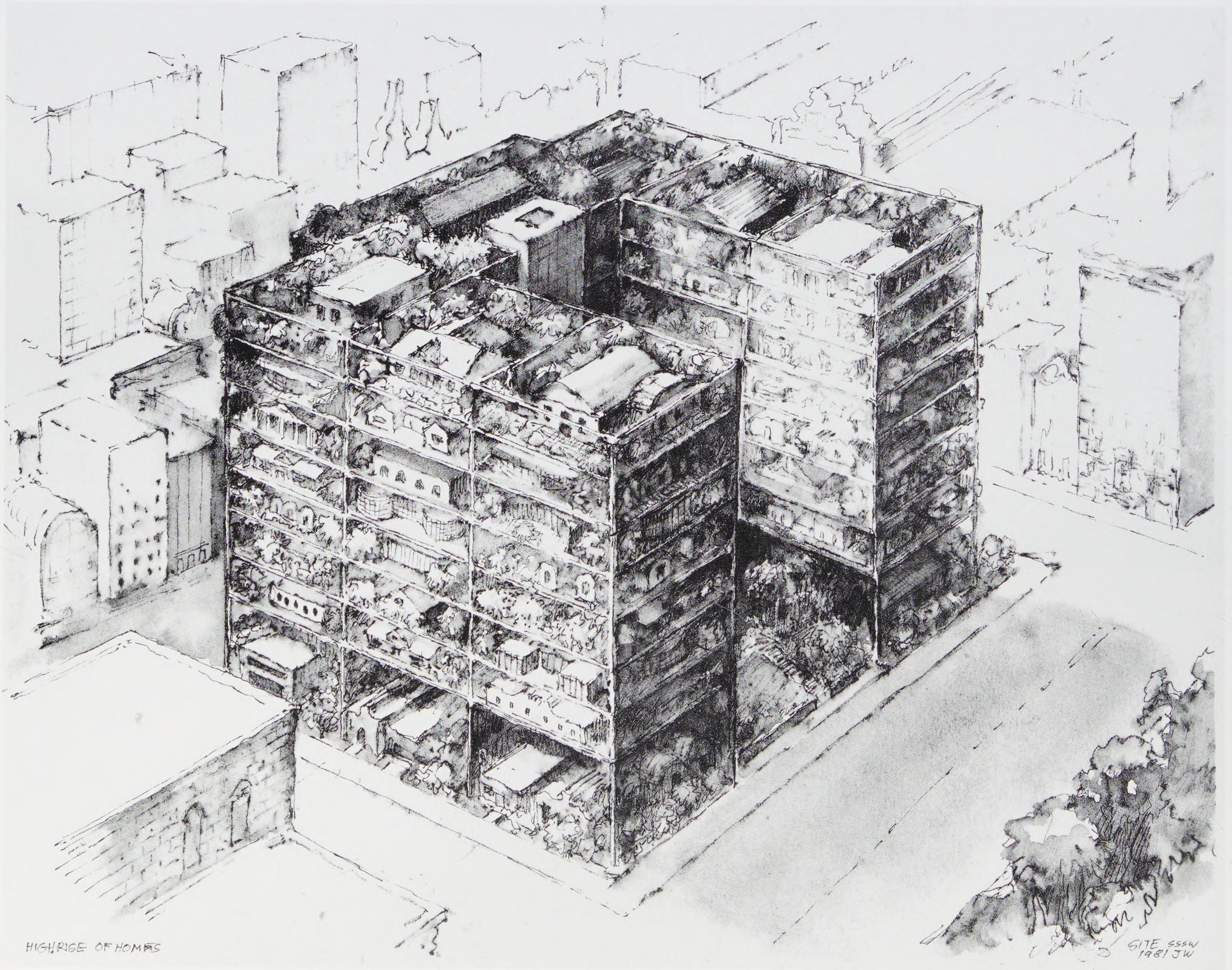


HIGHRISE OF HOMES

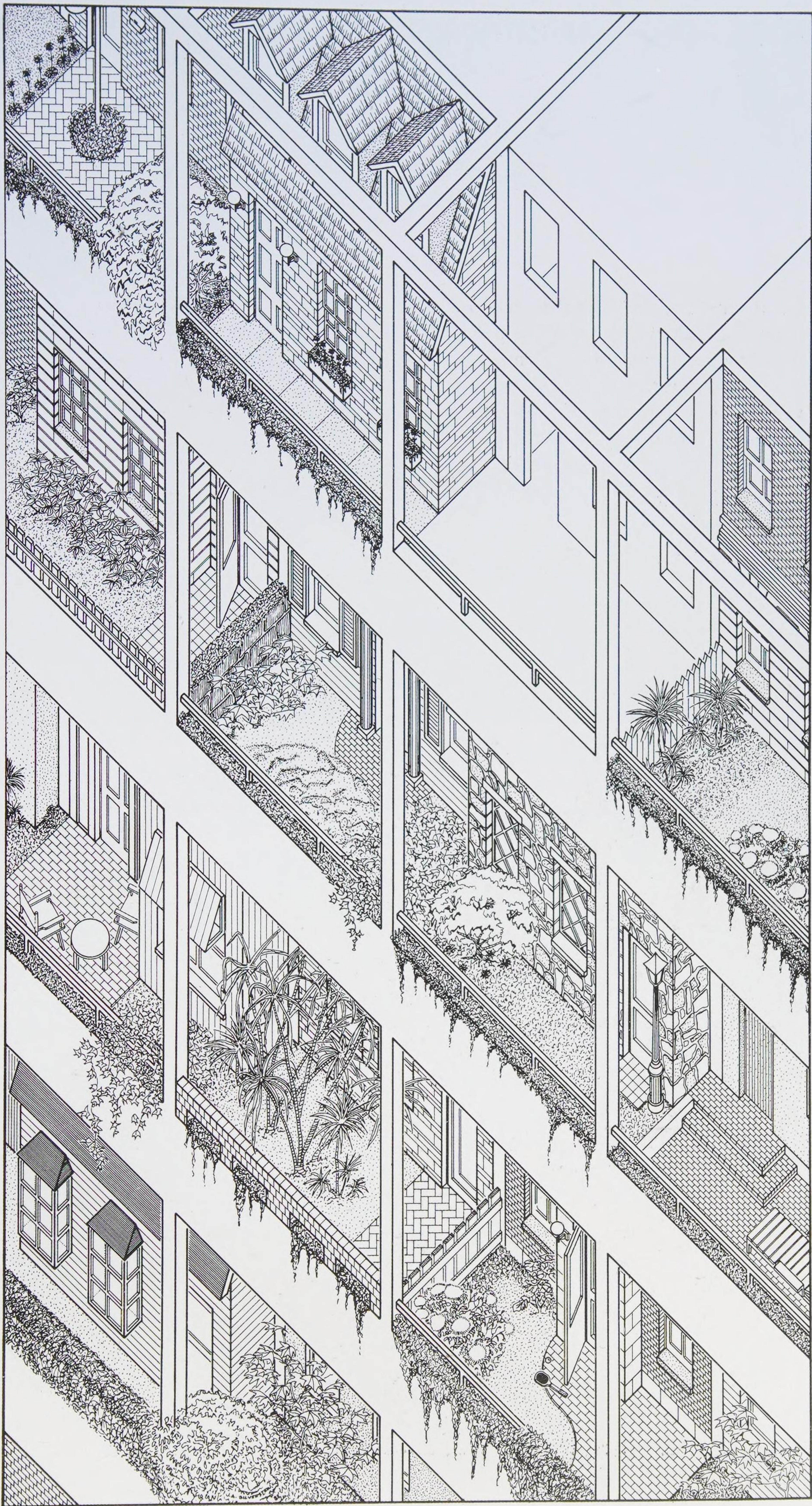
Major urban center
1981

This project, an experimental multiple dwelling composed of 15 to 20 stories, is to be located in a densely populated urban center. Intended for mixed-income residents, it includes shopping and recreational facilities. The configuration of the structure is a steel and concrete matrix that supports a vertical community of private houses, clustered

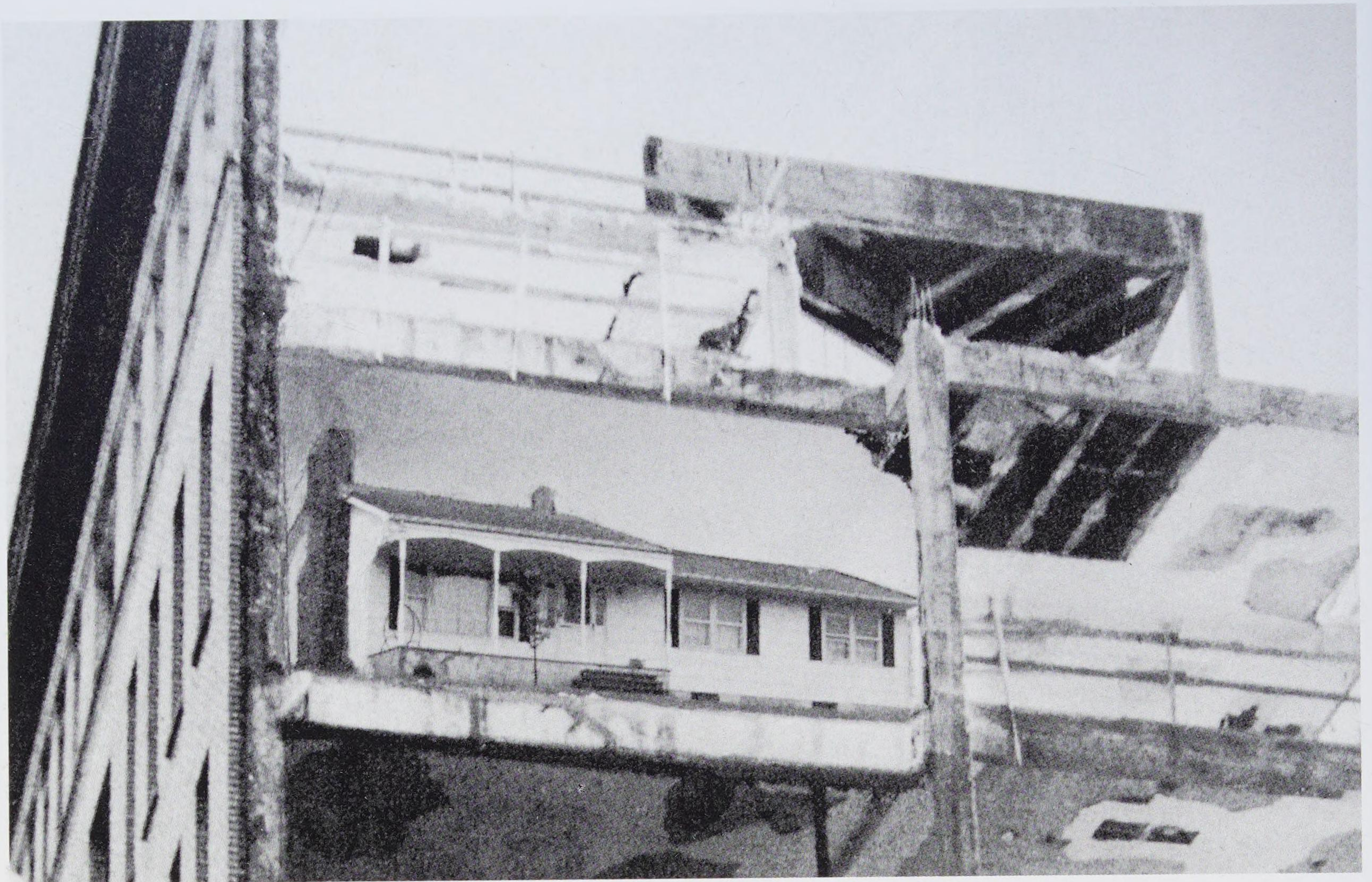
into distinct villagelike communities on each level. The floors function as flexible platforms that can be purchased in real estate parcels and built to suit each inhabitant. A central elevator and mechanical core services the individual houses, gardens, and interior streets.



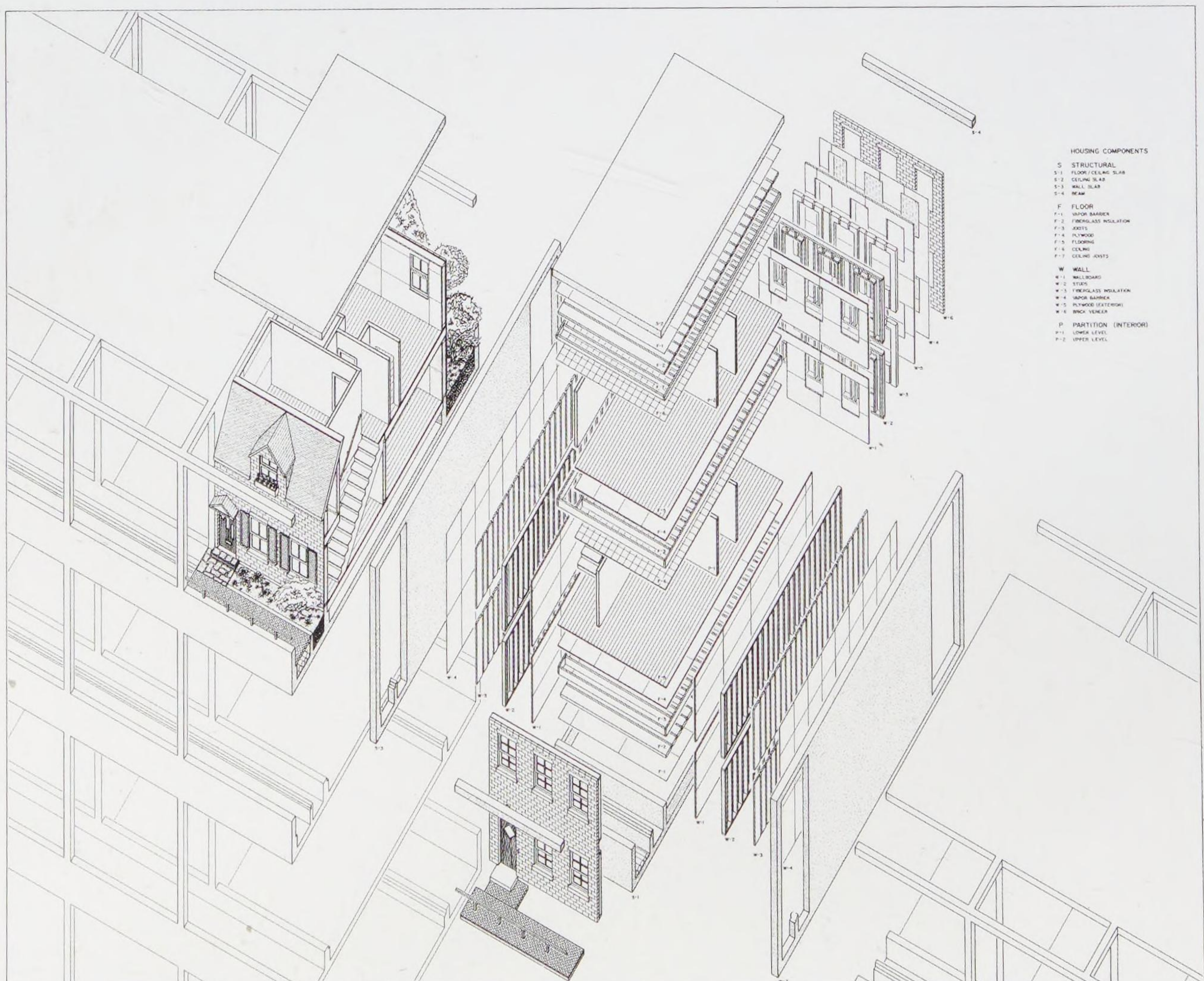
Sketch showing garden atrium and U-shaped configuration



Drawing of low-cost version with catalogue house units



Hypothetical house insertion utilizing abandoned factory grid



Low-cost version showing catalogue house assembly



General view

WILLIWEAR OFFICES AND SHOWROOMS

New York, New York

1982

WilliWear is a fashion design and manufacturing house in New York most famous for innovative casual wear. The garments are distinguished by witty and startling combinations of shapes and materials, a youthful exuberance, and an international flair interpreted for an American audience.

During the early development discussions for the showroom, WilliWear's designer, Willi Smith, indicated his preference for having his fashions displayed as part of street life, rather than as objects in an antiseptic salesroom.

In response to these comments, SITE conceived the showrooms as a collage of urban and waterfront street frag-

ments. Occupying approximately 2,000 square feet, the space is constructed entirely of found objects and exterior street elements, including brick, masonry block, corrugated tin siding, water and drain pipes, valves, chain-link fences, fire hydrants, and construction rubble. The interior, including all freestanding units, is painted one shade of gray. This monochrome effect destroys the anecdotal character of the collected objects and establishes a neutral background for the display of colorful garments. The extensive use of pipes, tubes, grates, chains, and fences creates a convenient system for hanging the clothes.



Detail of women's showroom



Office of designer Willi Smith



Women's showroom reception desk



General view of women's showroom



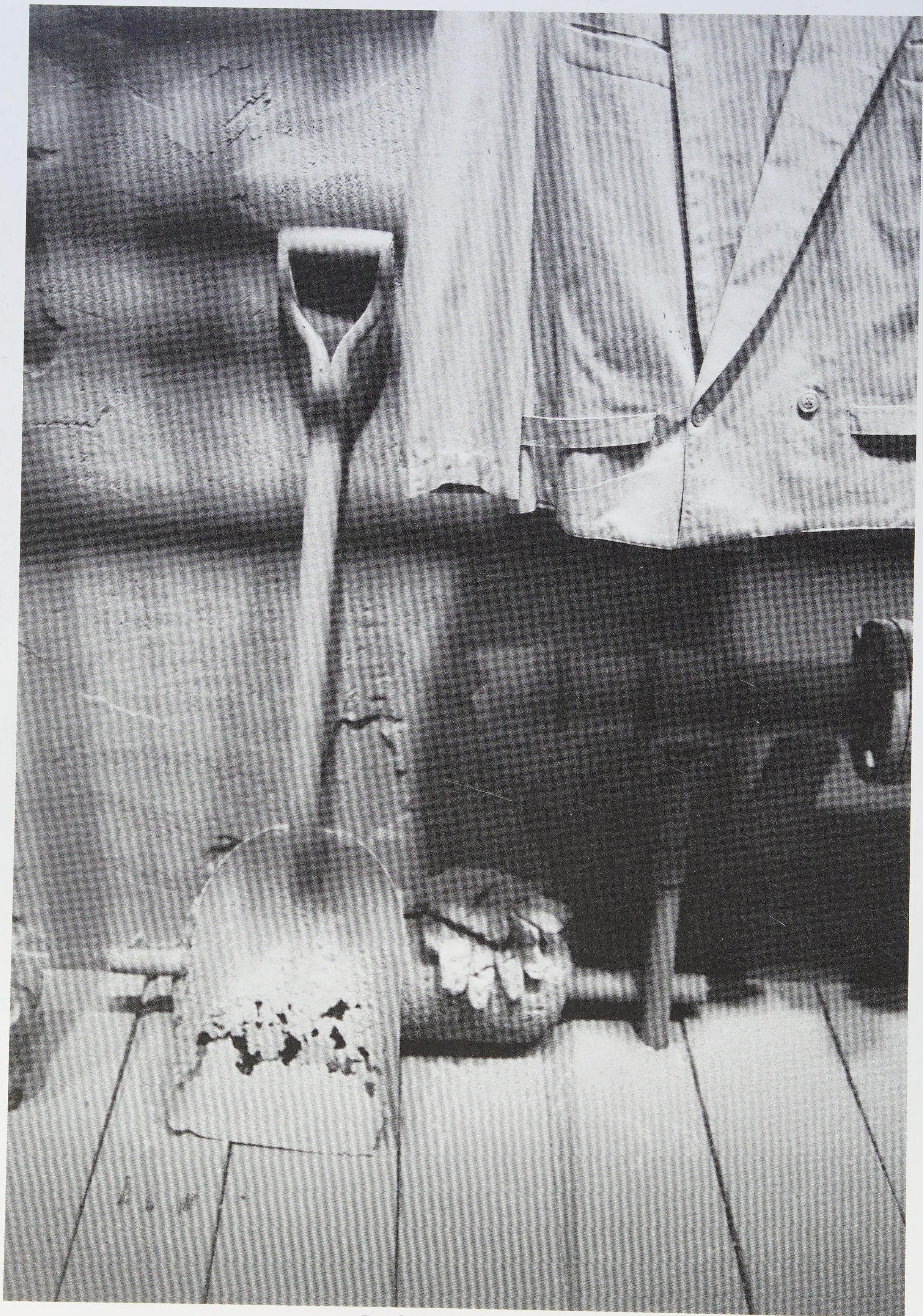
Detail of fence hanging system for garment display



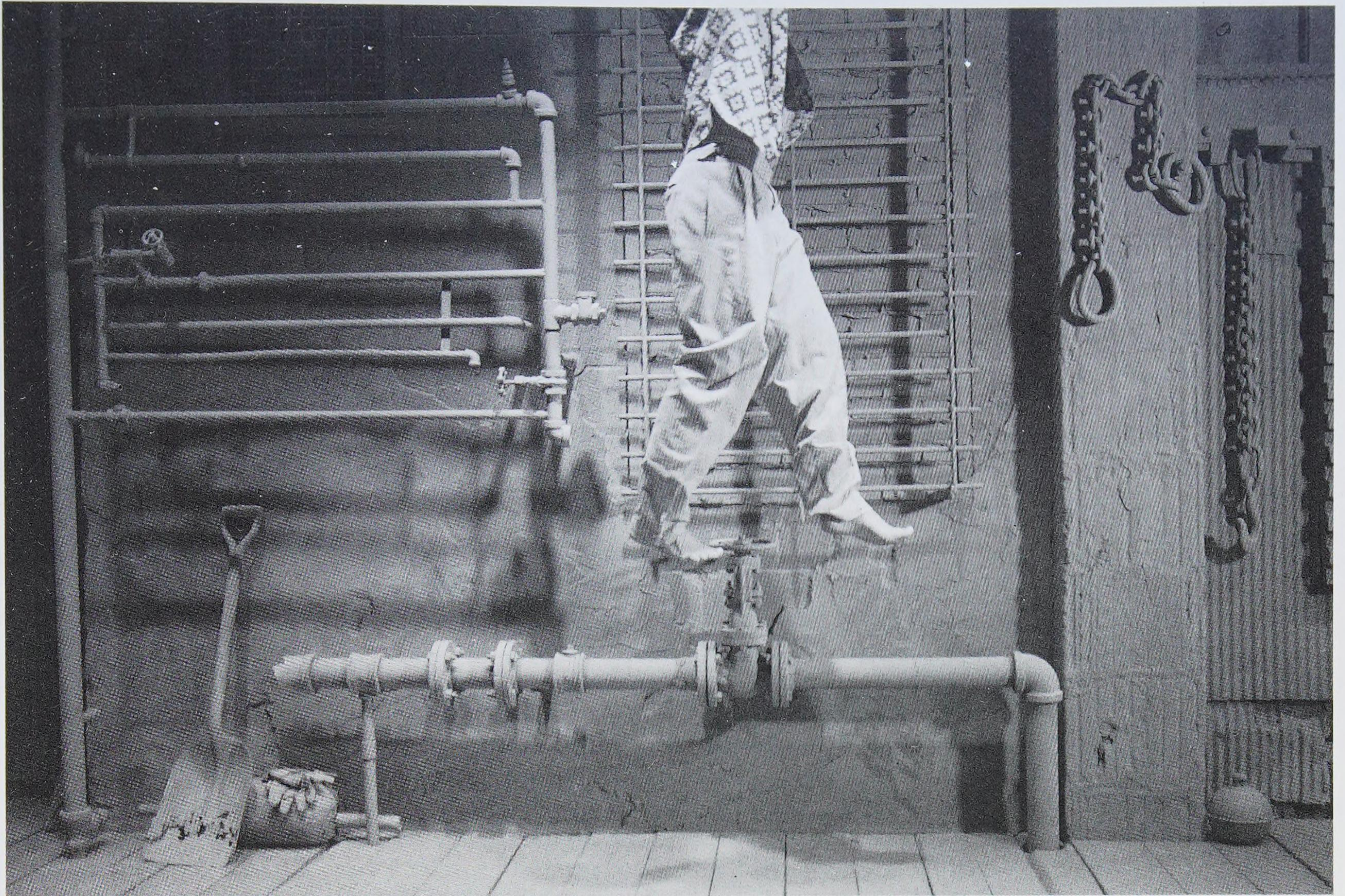
General view of men's showroom



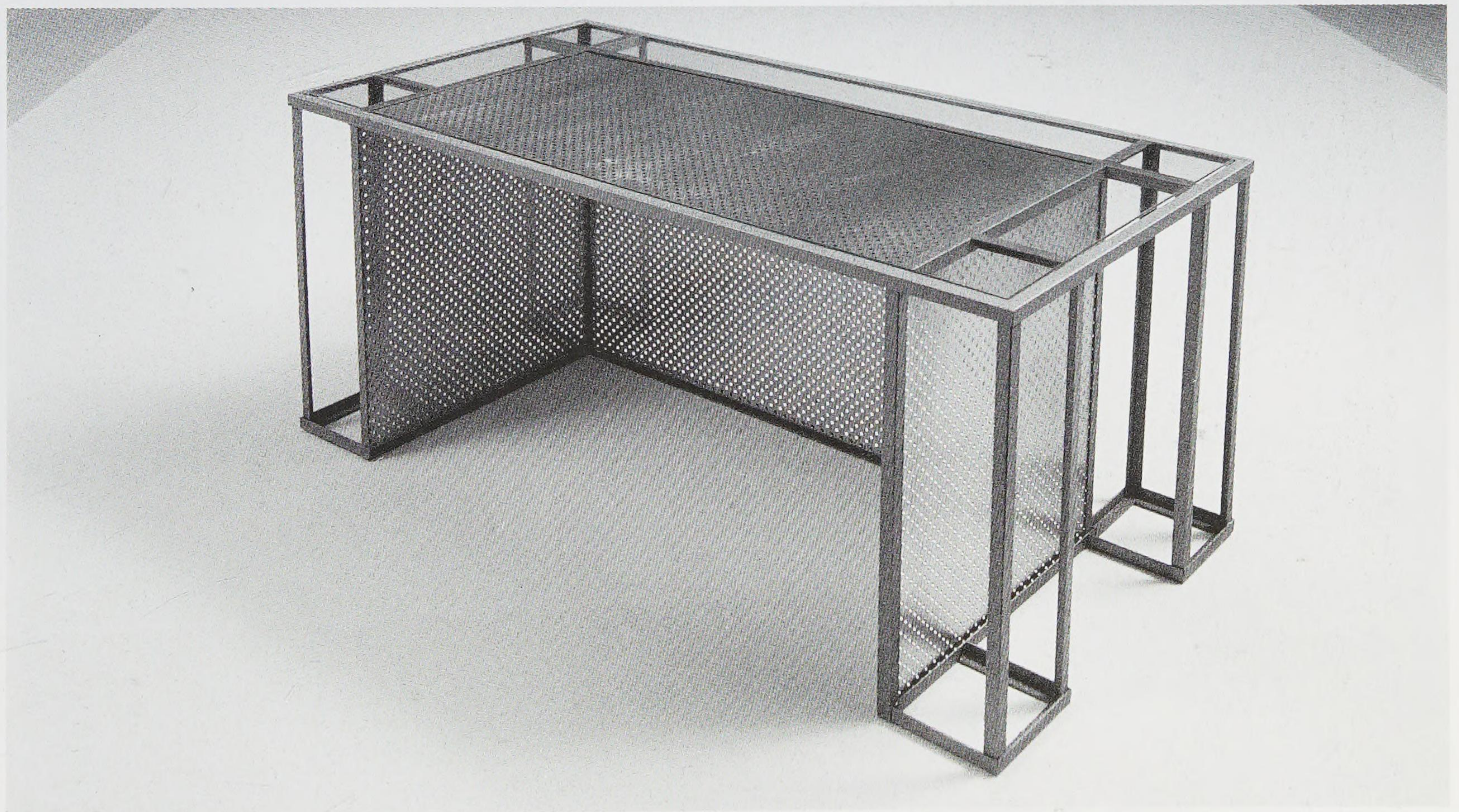
Detail of men's showroom wall



Detail of men's showroom



Detail of men's showroom with model



Model of steel desk for WilliWear offices

FRANKFURT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Frankfurt, West Germany
1983

This project was developed by SITE as an entry in a competition sponsored by the municipal government of Frankfurt for a new Museum of Modern Art. The designated site, currently occupied by a municipal parking lot, is a triangular intersection flanked by three major streets. The museum itself is part of a new cultural development program in Frankfurt that includes a series of large exhibition facilities over the next few years. Almost completely destroyed by bombing raids during the Second World War, virtually the entire city has been rebuilt, with the exception of the cathedral and some of the buildings in Braubachstrasse. There is a central commercial area of high-rise offices, and the rest is largely domestic architecture from the 1950s in stucco or masonry.

Among the program requirements for the museum was the stipulation that the new museum structure respect the character of the neighborhood, especially the domestic architecture of Braubachstrasse, but also act as a dramatic focal point in the neighborhood and a gateway project to the city as a whole.

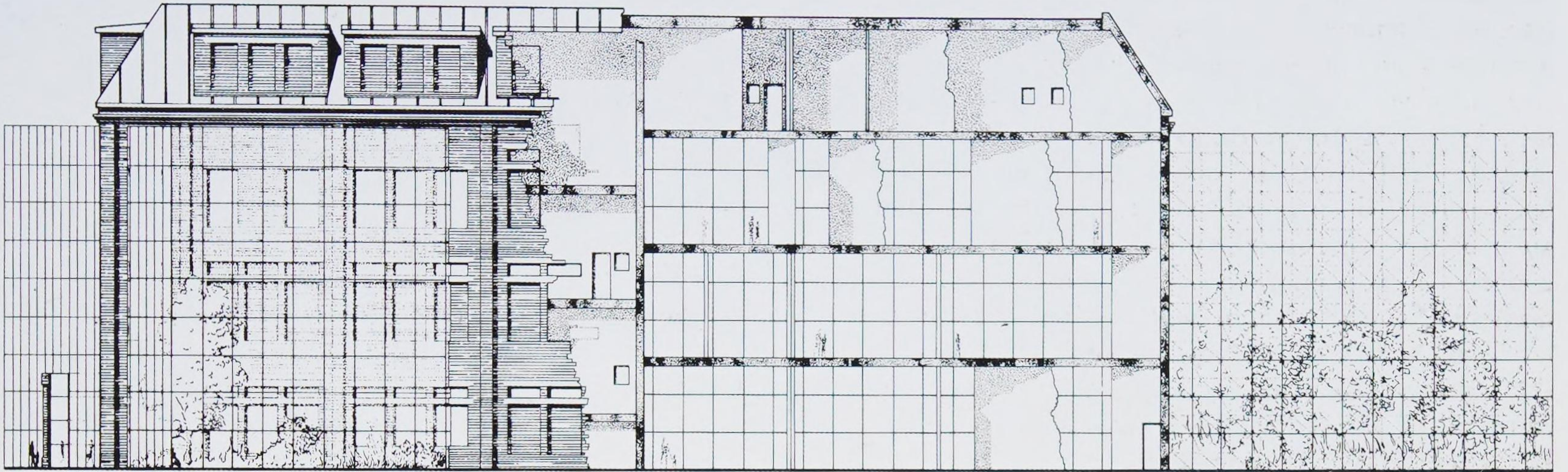
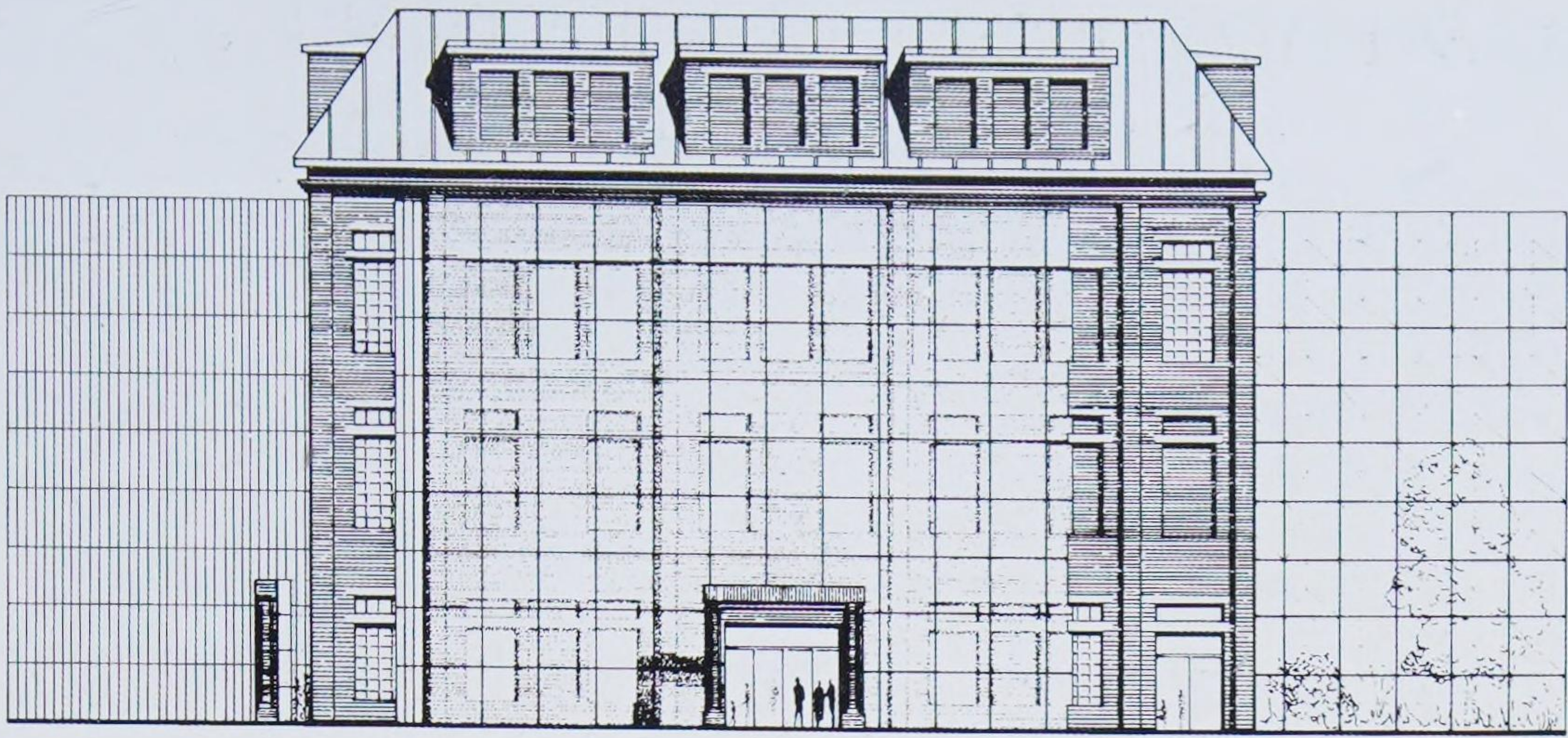
The director of the new Museum of Modern Art defined his objectives to establish a building that is dramatic and expressive on the exterior and extremely simple and flexible on the interior, a structure that would serve as an industrial warehouse for the storage and exhibition of art but would also accommodate such expanded art forms as video and performance. The museum is meant to be a showcase to both exhibit and encourage experimentation in the visual arts.

For practical and philosophical reasons, SITE decided to place a rectangular building on the triangular site. From a functional standpoint, this concept avoids the awkward interior spaces typical of triangular structures. From an aesthetic perspective, this denial of the site is a rejection of the standard celebration of the triangle that would have been a more conventional tactic.

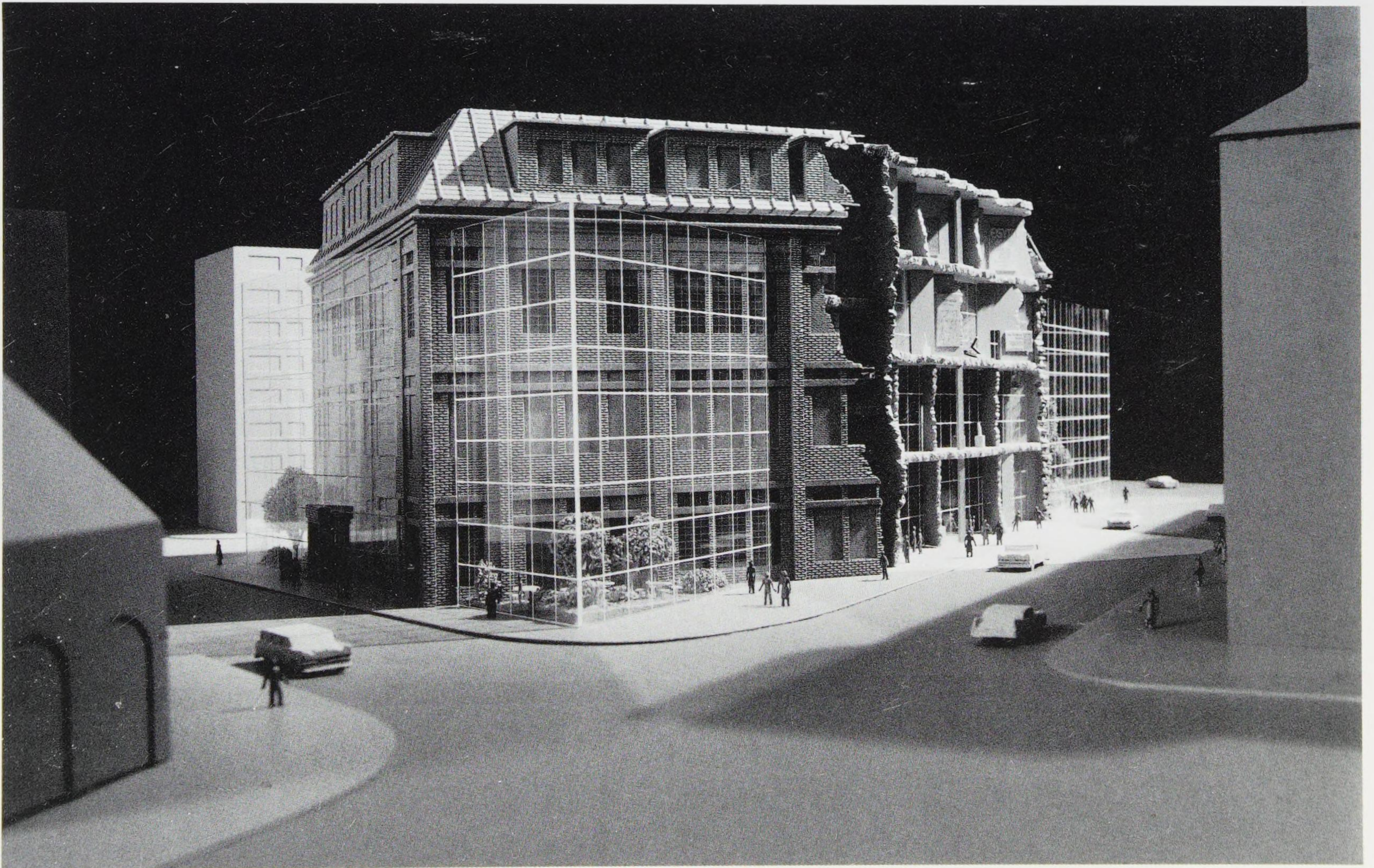
The first stage of the concept was a graphic definition of the site area. The second procedure was to insert a rectangular building (the actual museum enclosure) with an orientation consistent with the other major public buildings in Frankfurt.

Since it is necessary for the spectator to be aware of the triangular configuration of the site in order to understand the invasion of the rectangle, the area is defined by an abstraction of the triangle: glass supported by a space frame, which penetrates the masonry structure of the museum. This enclosure also functions as a café and a sculpture garden.

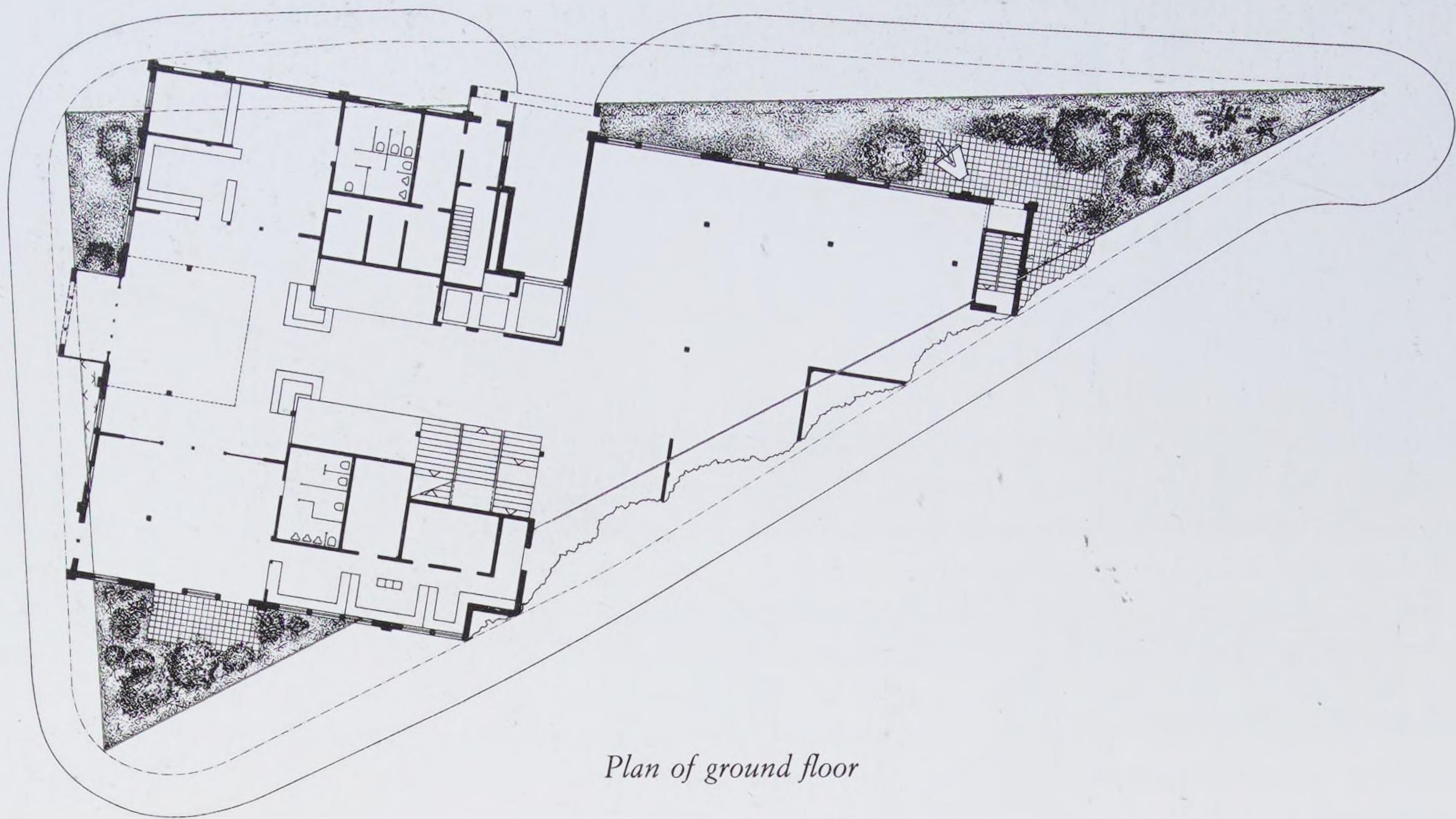
When this ensemble of interpenetrating structures is placed on the actual site, it becomes necessary to sever one corner of the rectangular museum facing Braubachstrasse in order to allow the street to pass freely. Rather than design this incision in a geometric and formalistic way, the convention of the architectural cutaway is used to create a more intense dialogue between exterior and interior. The ledges resulting from the cutaway are used to exhibit outdoor sculptures, thereby heightening the dominant inside/outside theme of the project.



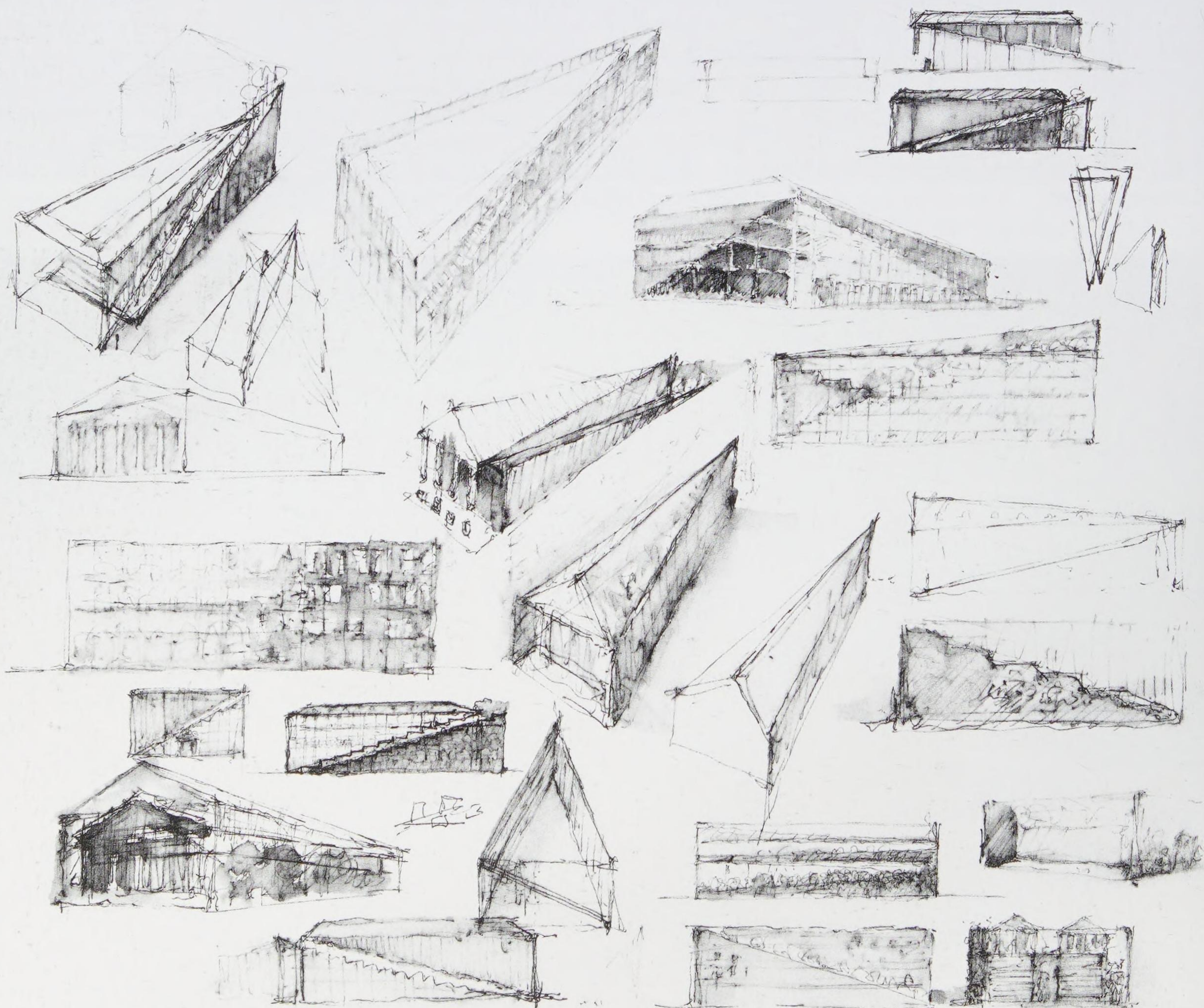
Elevations



Model showing view from Braubachstrasse



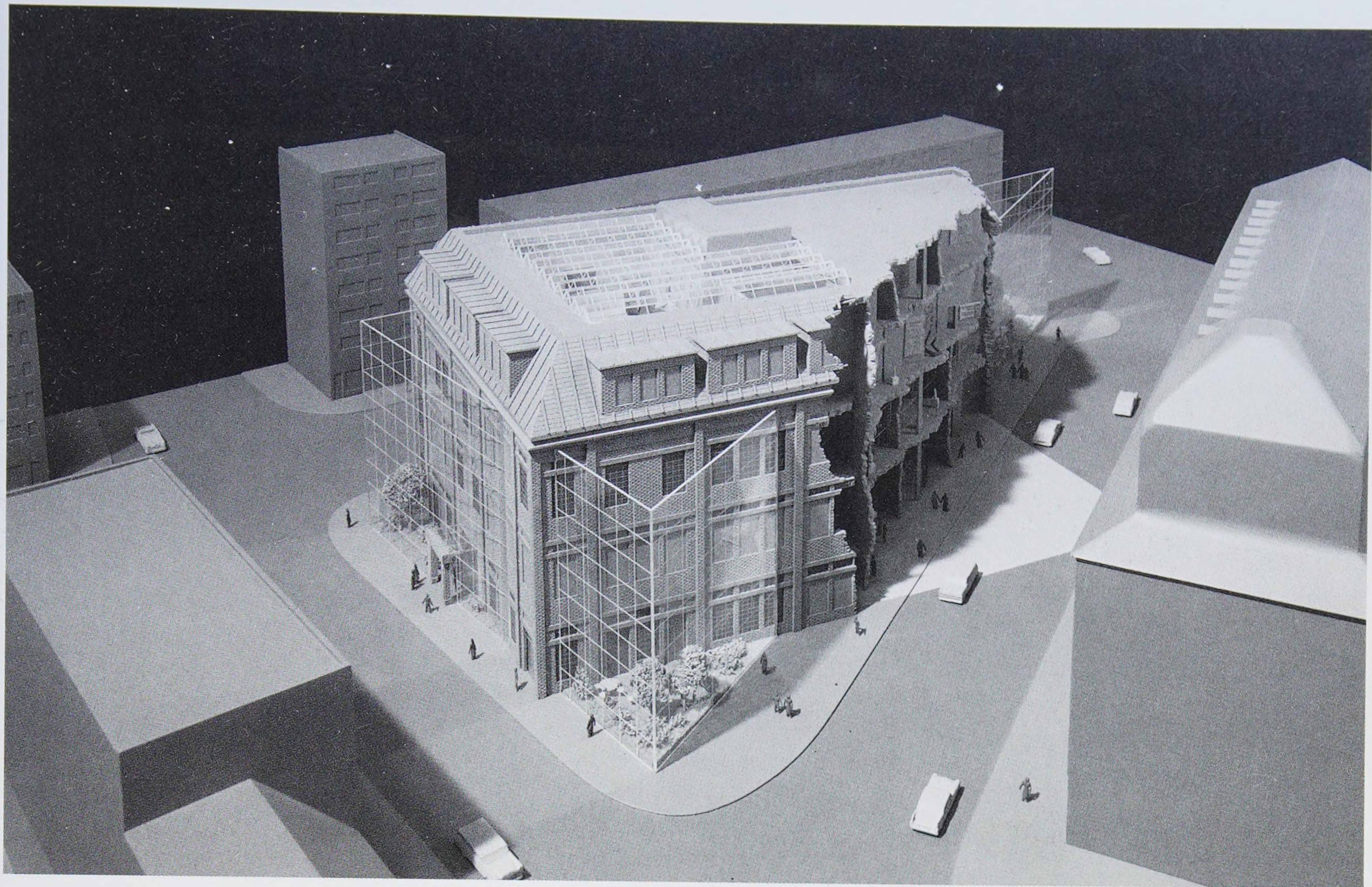
Plan of ground floor



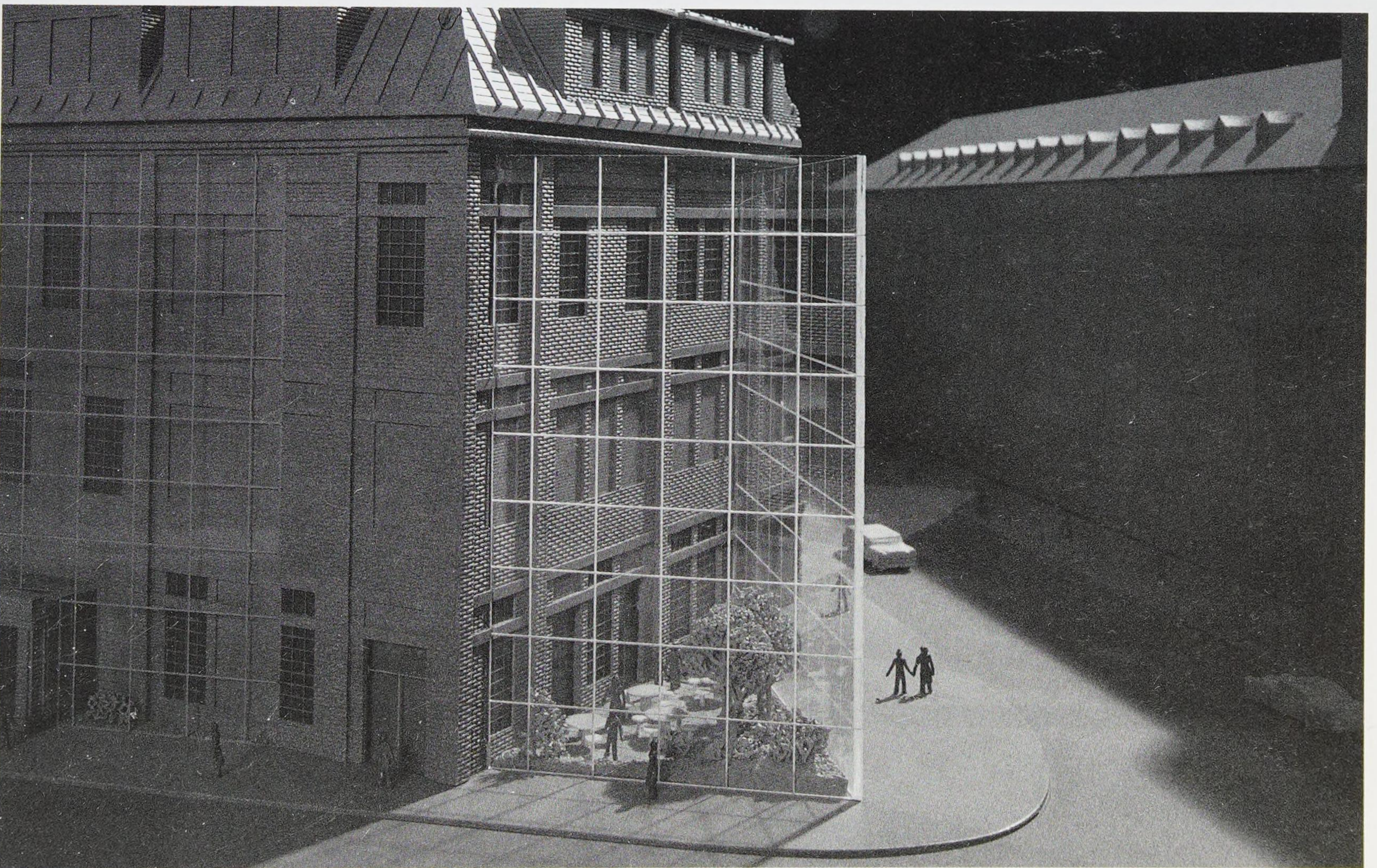
Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art - split structure concept variations.

1983 SITE 655W - J.W.

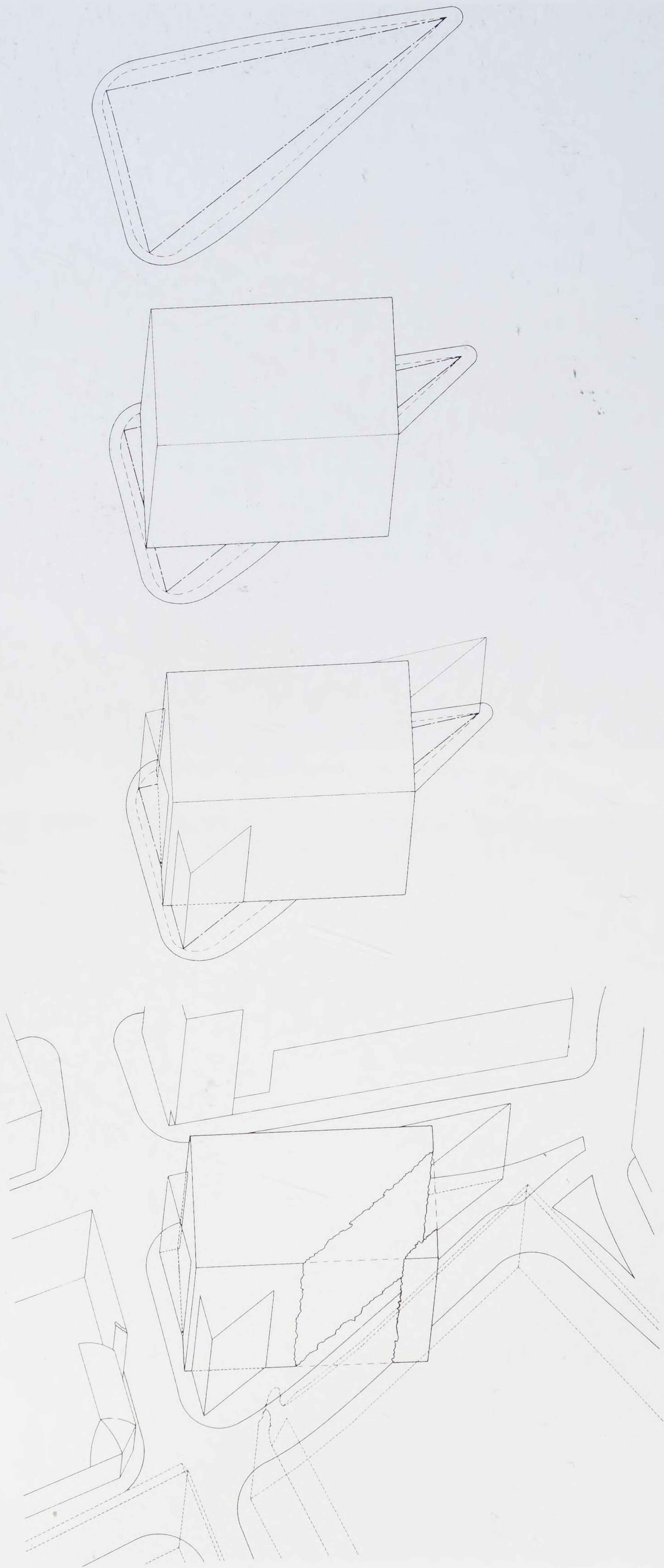
Early conceptual sketches showing plan as elevation



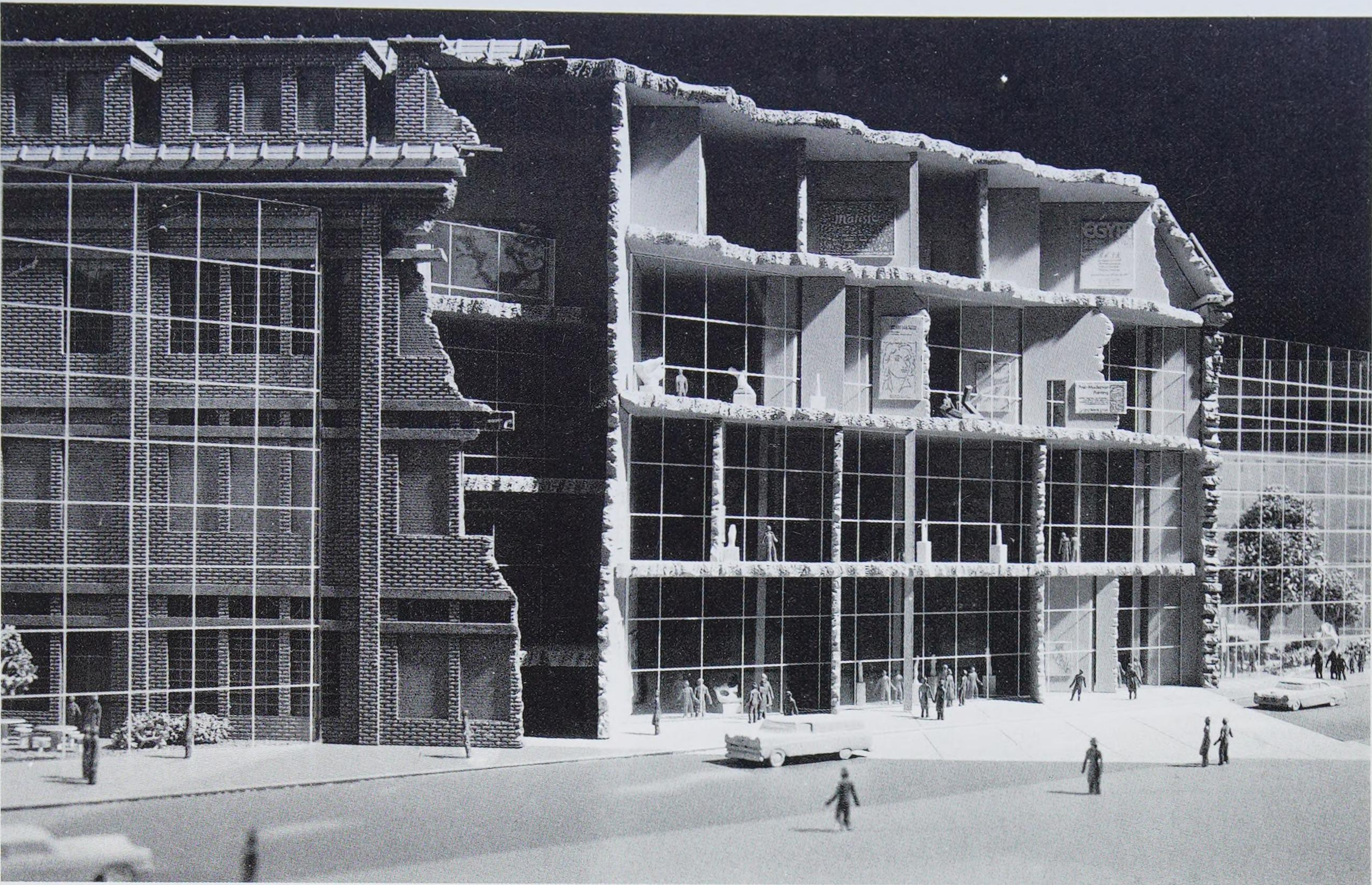
Overview of model from Braubachstrasse



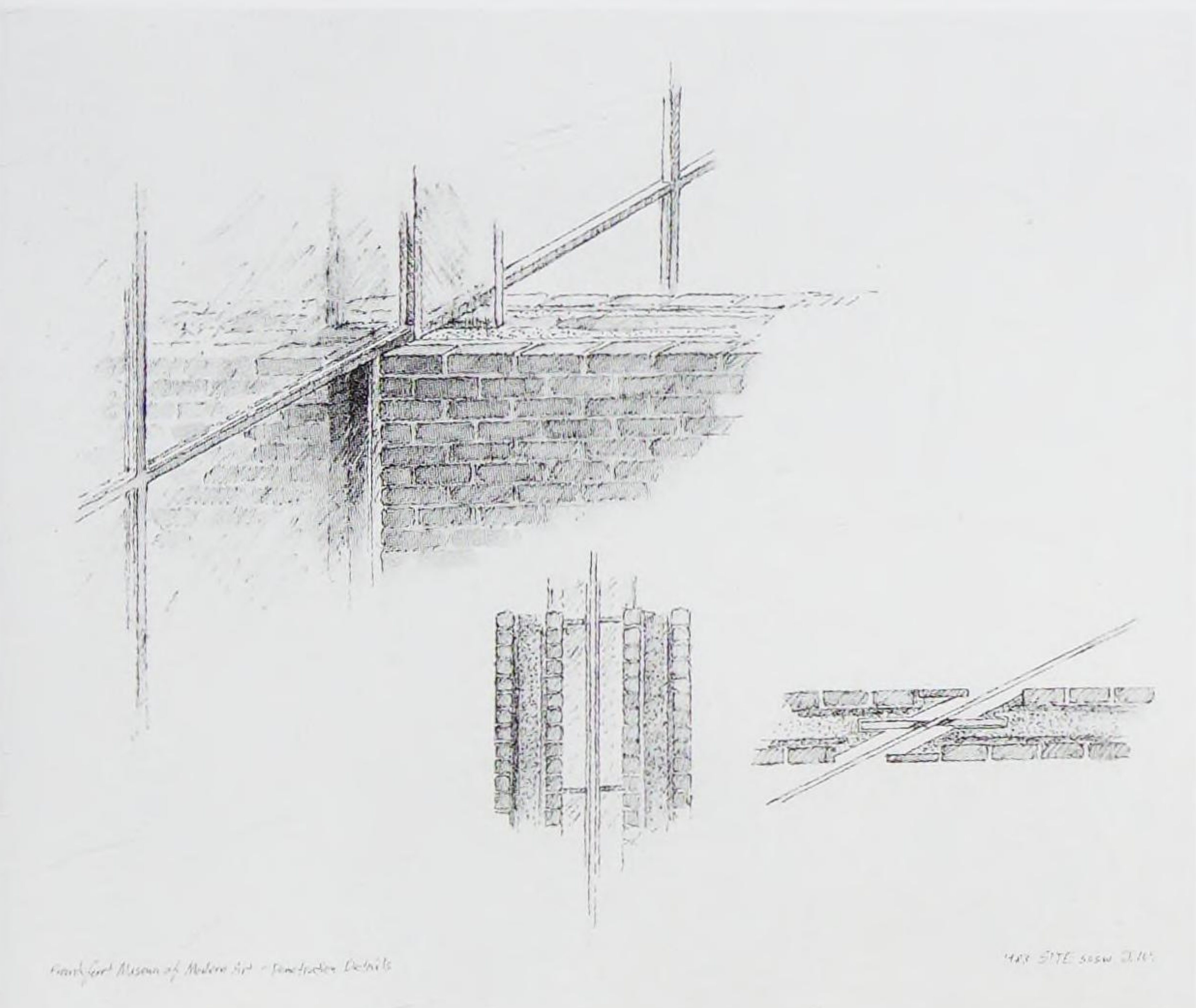
Model showing café garden



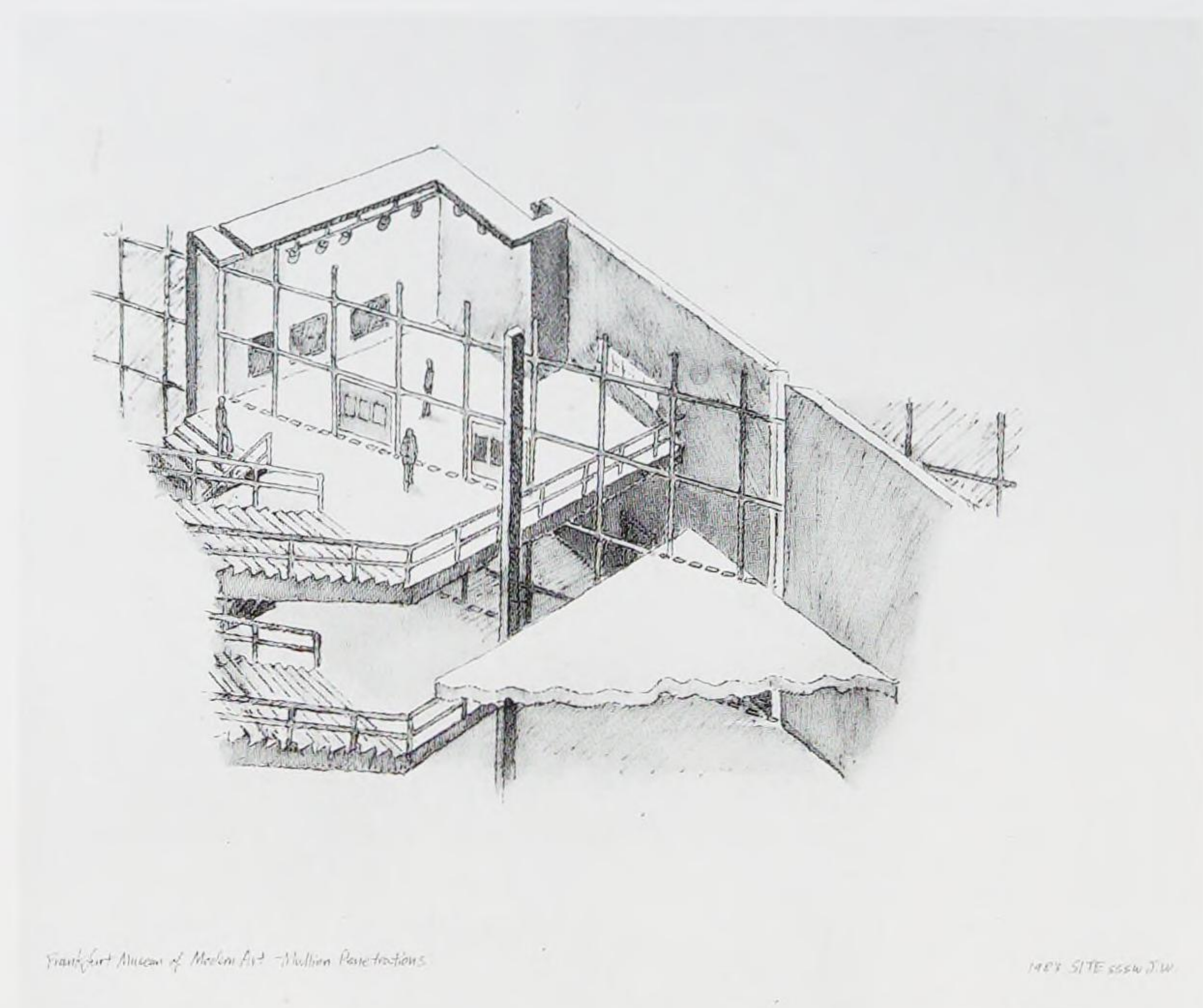
Conceptual axonometric showing idea development



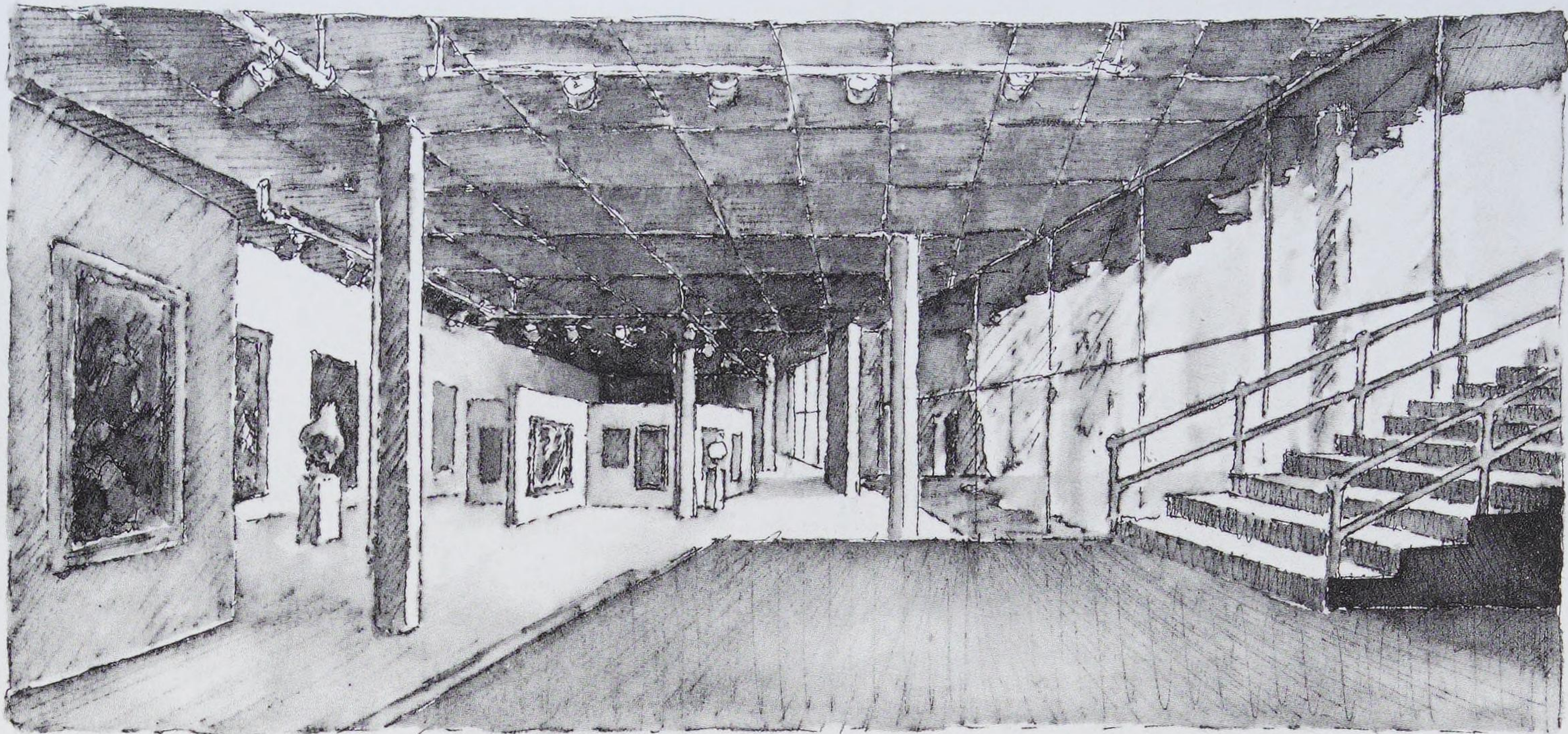
View of cutaway wall facing Braubachstrasse



Wall and space frame intersection



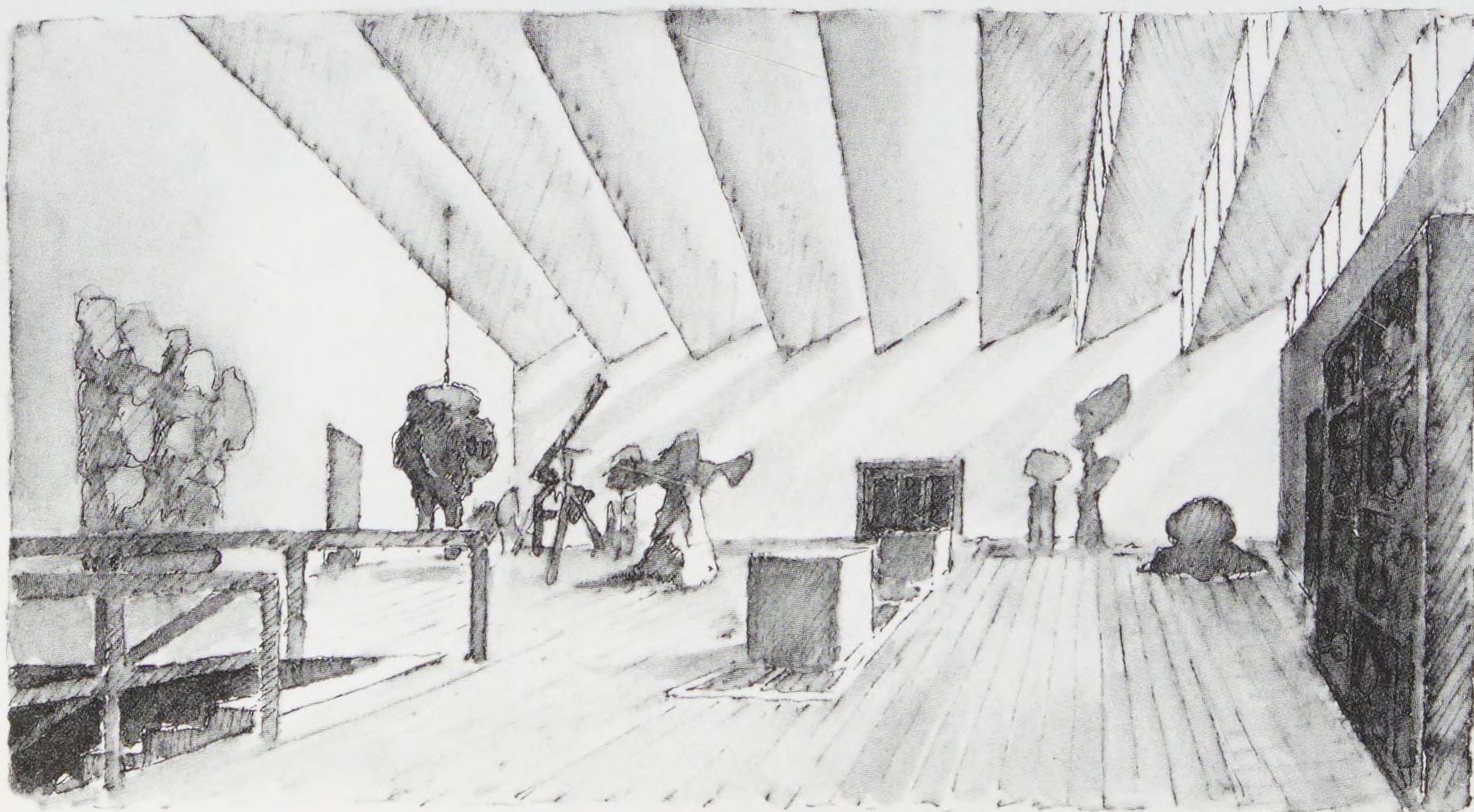
Wall and space frame intersection in stairwell



Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art - General View of an Exhibition Space

1983 SITE SSSW J.W.

Interior view of typical gallery



Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art -
Top floor exhibition space.

1983 SITE SSSW J.W.

Interior view of skylighted sculpture gallery



Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art
 Symbolic graphic and glass infill
 wall penetrations

1983. SITE SSSW J.W.

Interior of typical office showing symbolic graphic of triangular site

FLOATING McDONALD'S RESTAURANT

Berwyn, Illinois
1983

This McDonald's restaurant is intended to have commemorative significance for the corporation. Located near the hometown of company founder Ray Kroc, it is also in the vicinity of the first McDonald's stand built in the United States.

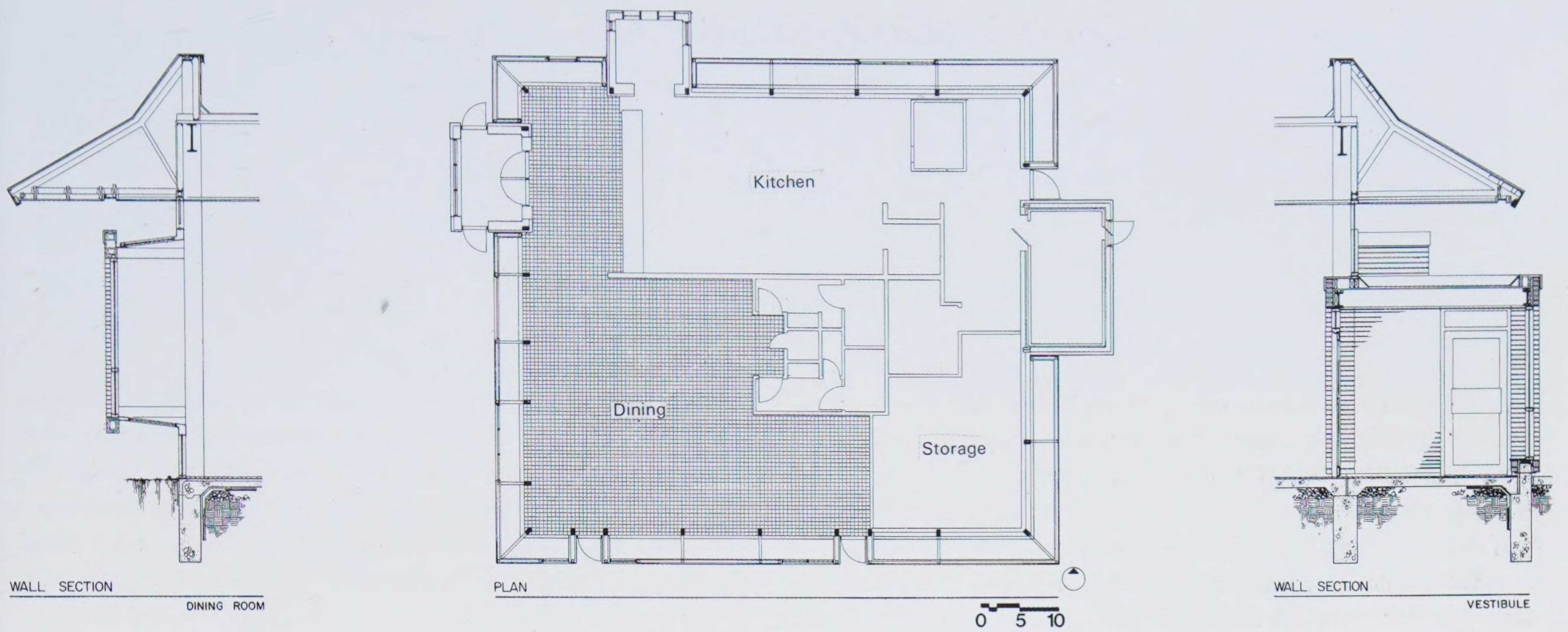
While developing the concept, SITE observed that every freestanding McDonald's restaurant is composed of certain standard parts—mansard roof, Colonial-style windows and vestibule, brick-faced exterior, and the familiar “golden arches” logo—all symbols of reflex identification for a universal audience. SITE decided to retain all of these prototypical elements, albeit rearranged, to hyperbolize their individual and collective identities. In the Berwyn facility,

each of the architectural ingredients is dislodged from its customary position, producing the final effect of a “floating” building when viewed from the exterior. The interior utilizes the unique engineering system for the floating image as a means to provide an “under-the-building” garden.

In each of SITE's projects for commercial buildings, architecture itself has been used as the subject matter for an art statement. The concept for this McDonald's also serves as a commentary on the cubist influence in modern architecture. In this case, the complex interaction of volume and space is intended as an inversion of fast-food restaurant typology and customer expectations.



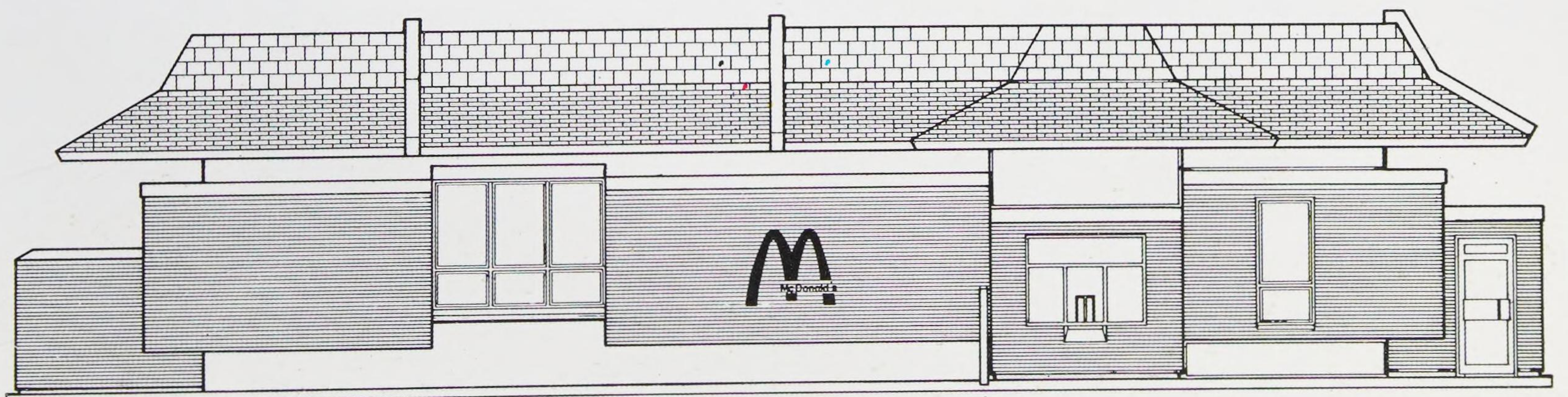
Dusk view of floating walls



Plan



West elevation



North elevation

BEDFORD HOUSE

Bedford, New York
1983

This 3,000-square-foot house, situated on a five-and-three-quarter-acre wooded site, is for a private client in Bedford, New York. The owner and his wife specifically requested that the residence be completely integrated with the forest, to a degree where the final structure might be described as invisible. They also expressed a strong desire to live with nature and to maintain total privacy.

The final concept is a response to these directives. When approaching the front of the building, it is difficult to discern where the house actually begins and where the forest stops. This is accomplished by allowing the forest to penetrate the

architecture in several layers. Whenever possible, existing trees and vegetation have been preserved. When viewed from the front, the building's first layer is natural forest, the second is a glass-block wall with conventional shuttered windows, the third is made up of trees and bushes behind the glass wall, and the fourth is an internal courtyard with more natural forest.

Consistent with SITE's philosophy of architecture as subject matter for art, the typology of the house is a conventional ranch style, organized in such a way that it appears to be a normal structure reclaimed by nature.

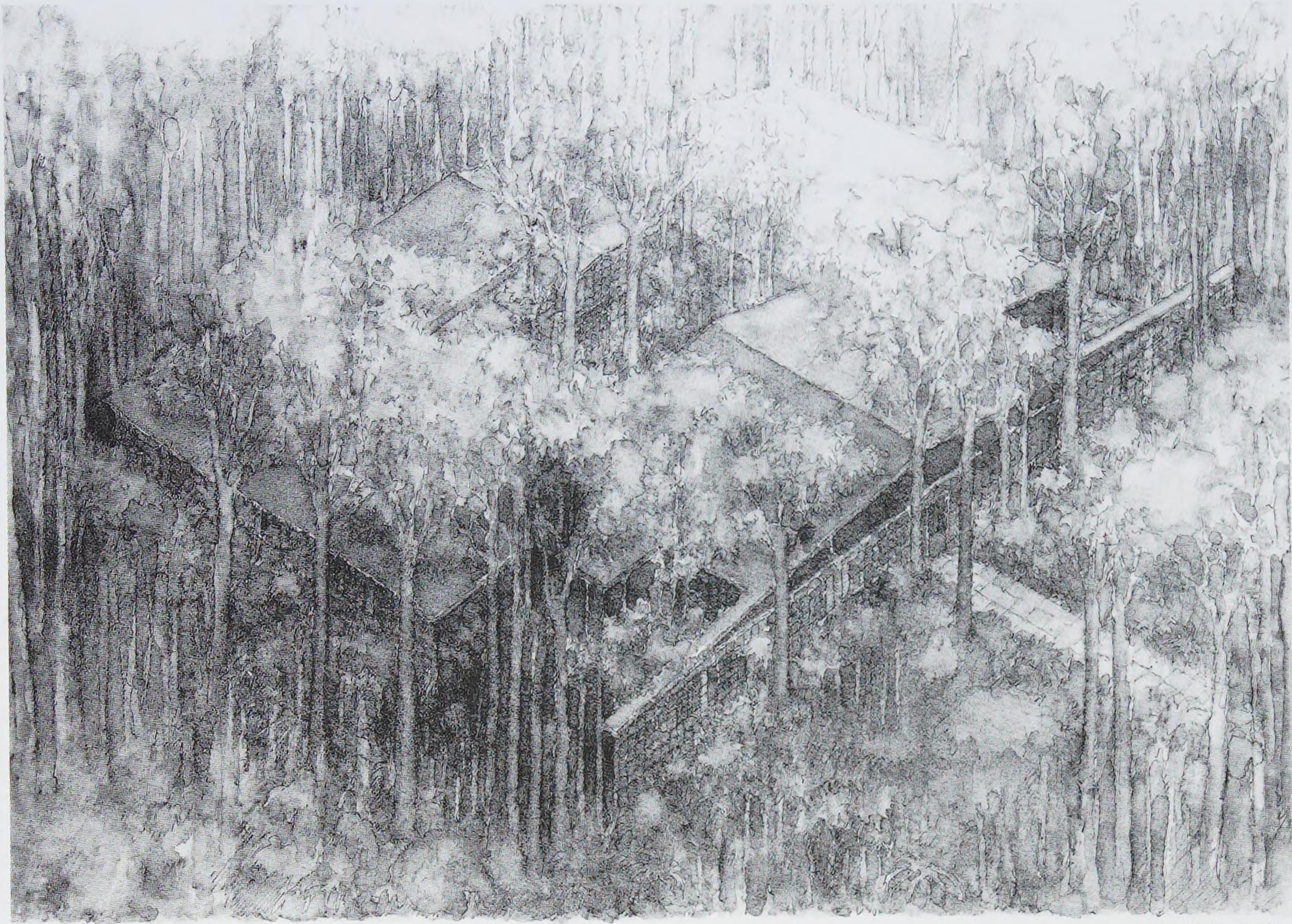


Axonometric



BEDFORD HOUSE - NORTH ELEVATION

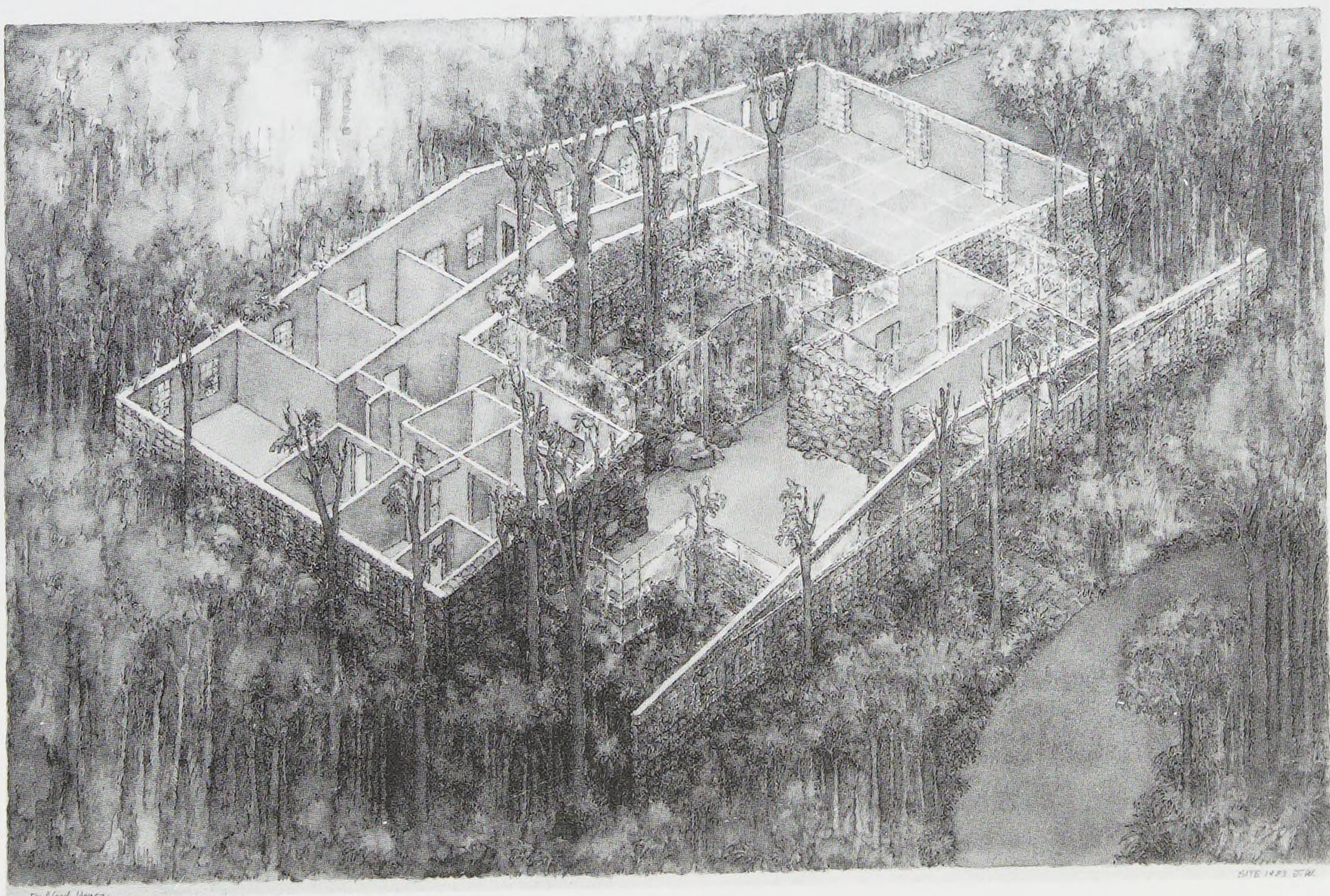
SITE 1425 3/4 N



Bedford House

SITE 1425 3/4 N

Views of house showing invasion of nature



Bedford House

SITE 1425 3/4 N

BEST INSIDE/OUTSIDE BUILDING

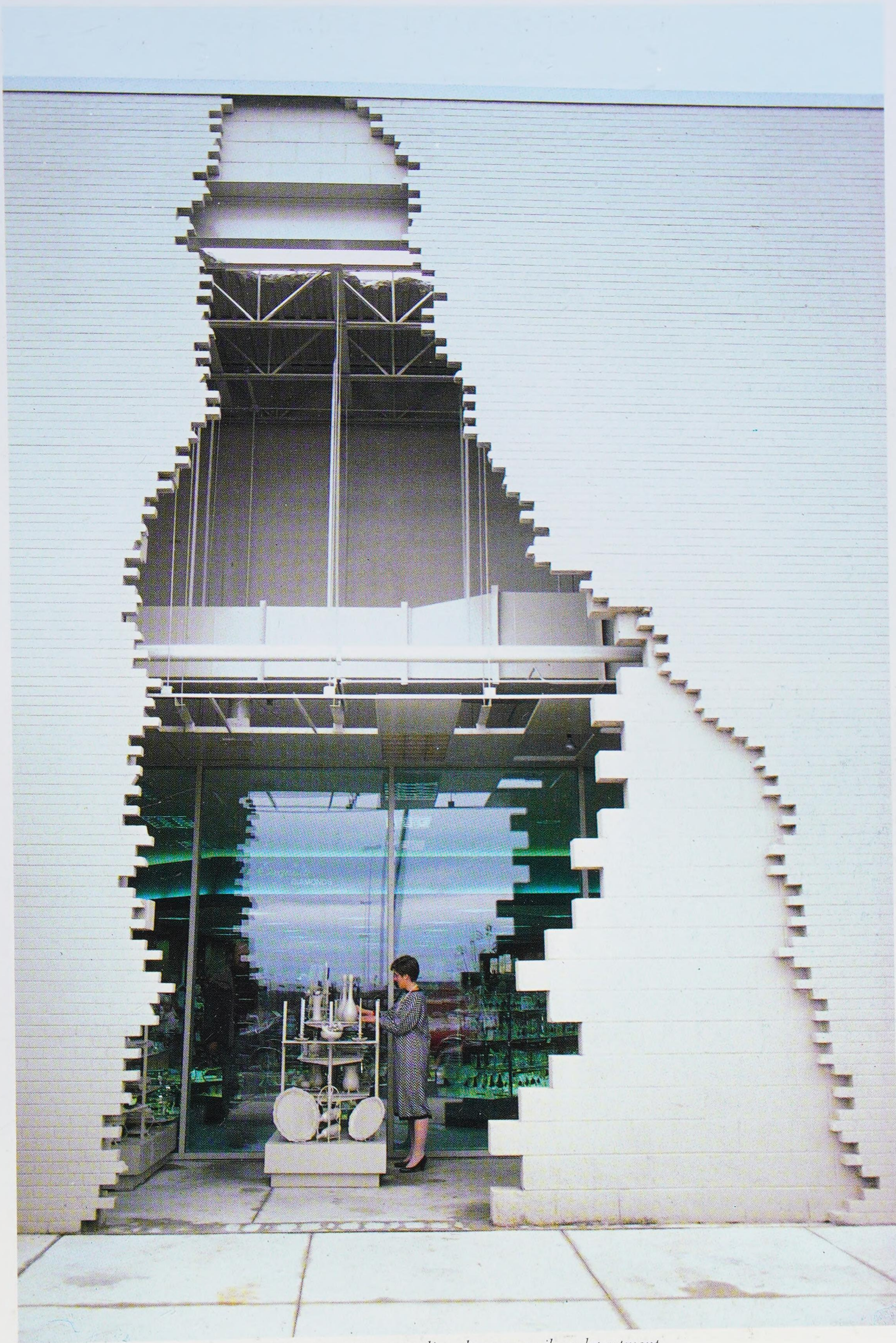
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
1984

The Best Products Milwaukee showroom deals with the theme of fragmentation and inversion. Large sections of the exterior walls have been broken away to reveal the interior. In exploring the philosophical notion of inside/outside, SITE decided to hyperbolize these two dimensions of reality. The exterior has been conceived as one total entity in monochrome gray; to add to this ambiguous sense of real and

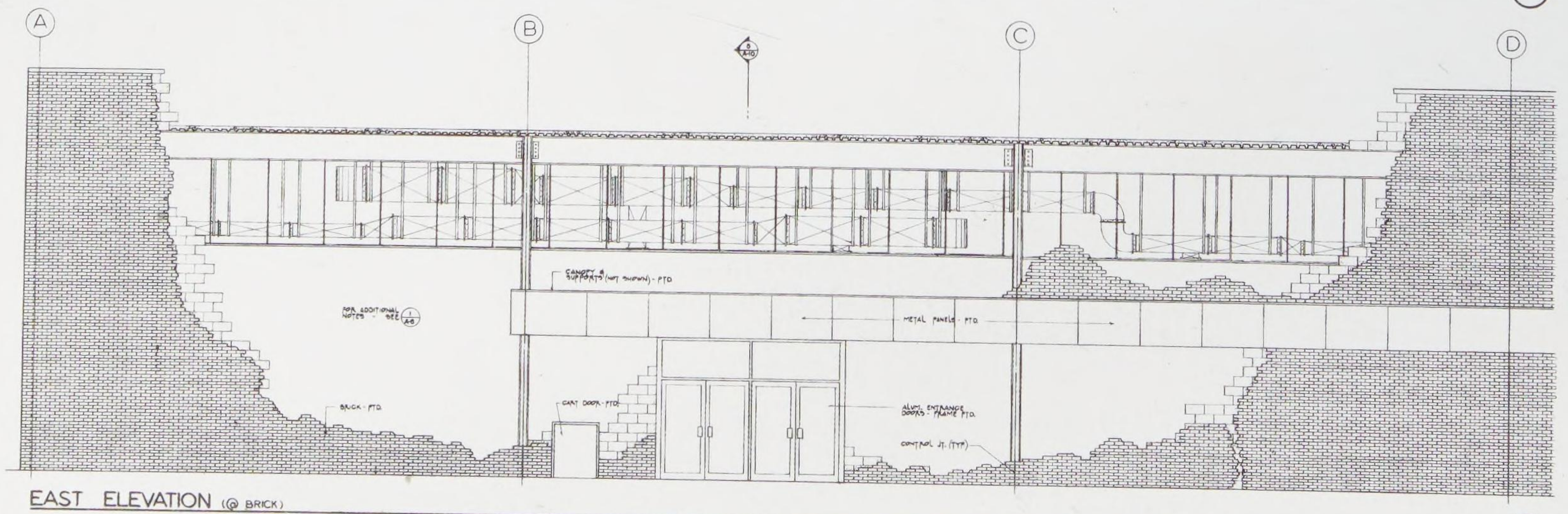
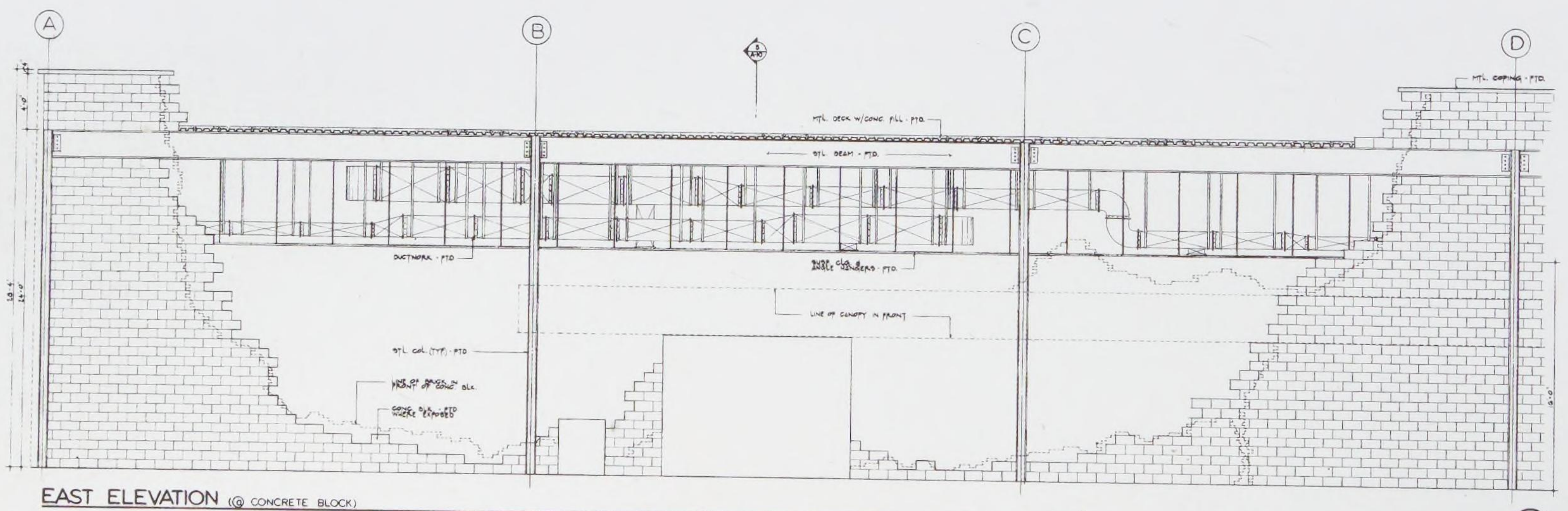
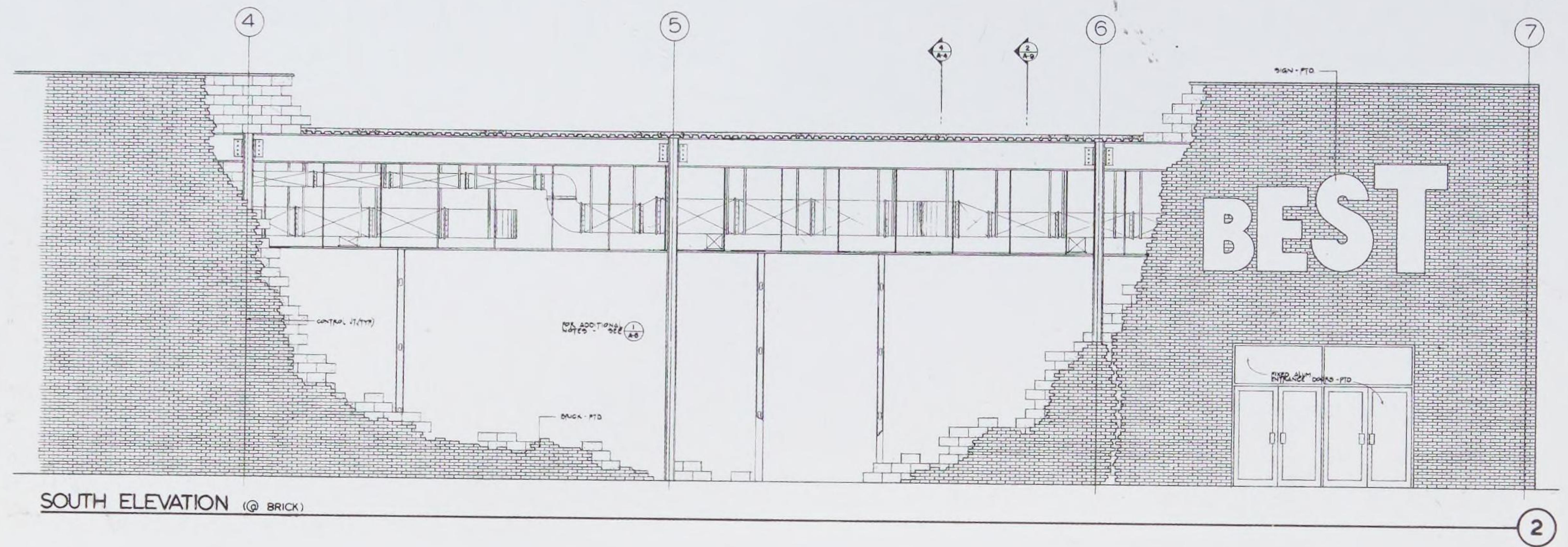
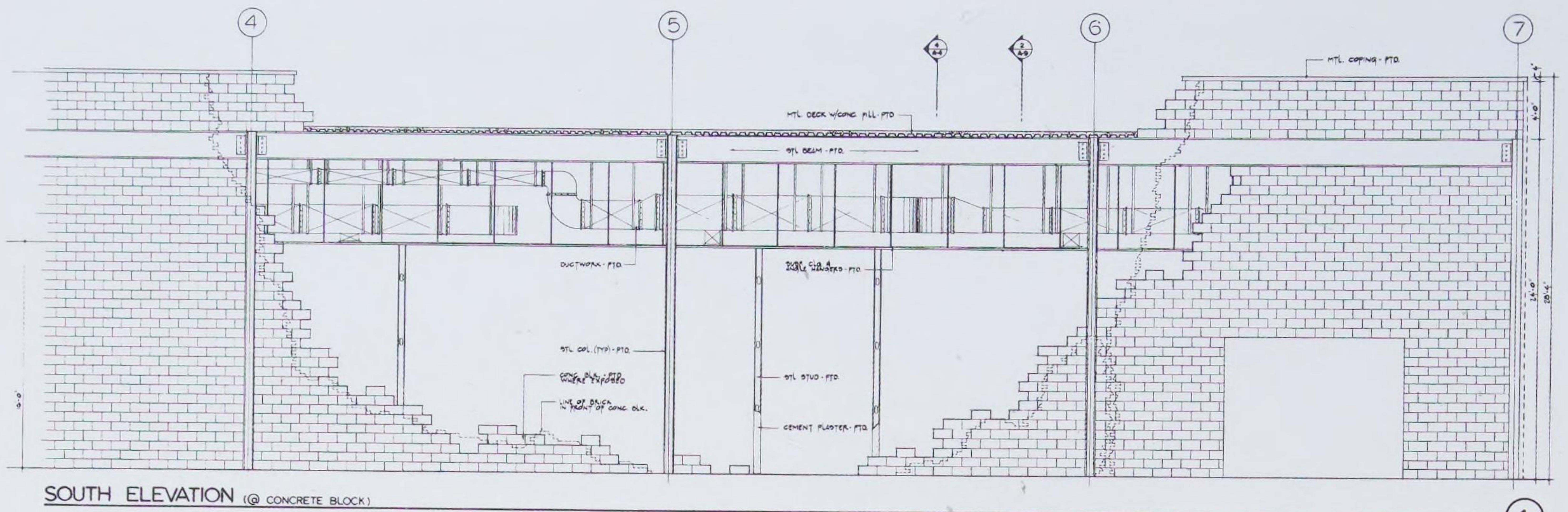
unreal, the merchandise items that would normally appear inside the showroom have been installed as part of the outside. For thermal sealing, a recessed glass wall separates these products from those on the interior, which are left in their natural color. At the point of intersection where the two sides are separated by the glass, there is a clear visual difference between the actual and the illusory.



General view of showroom

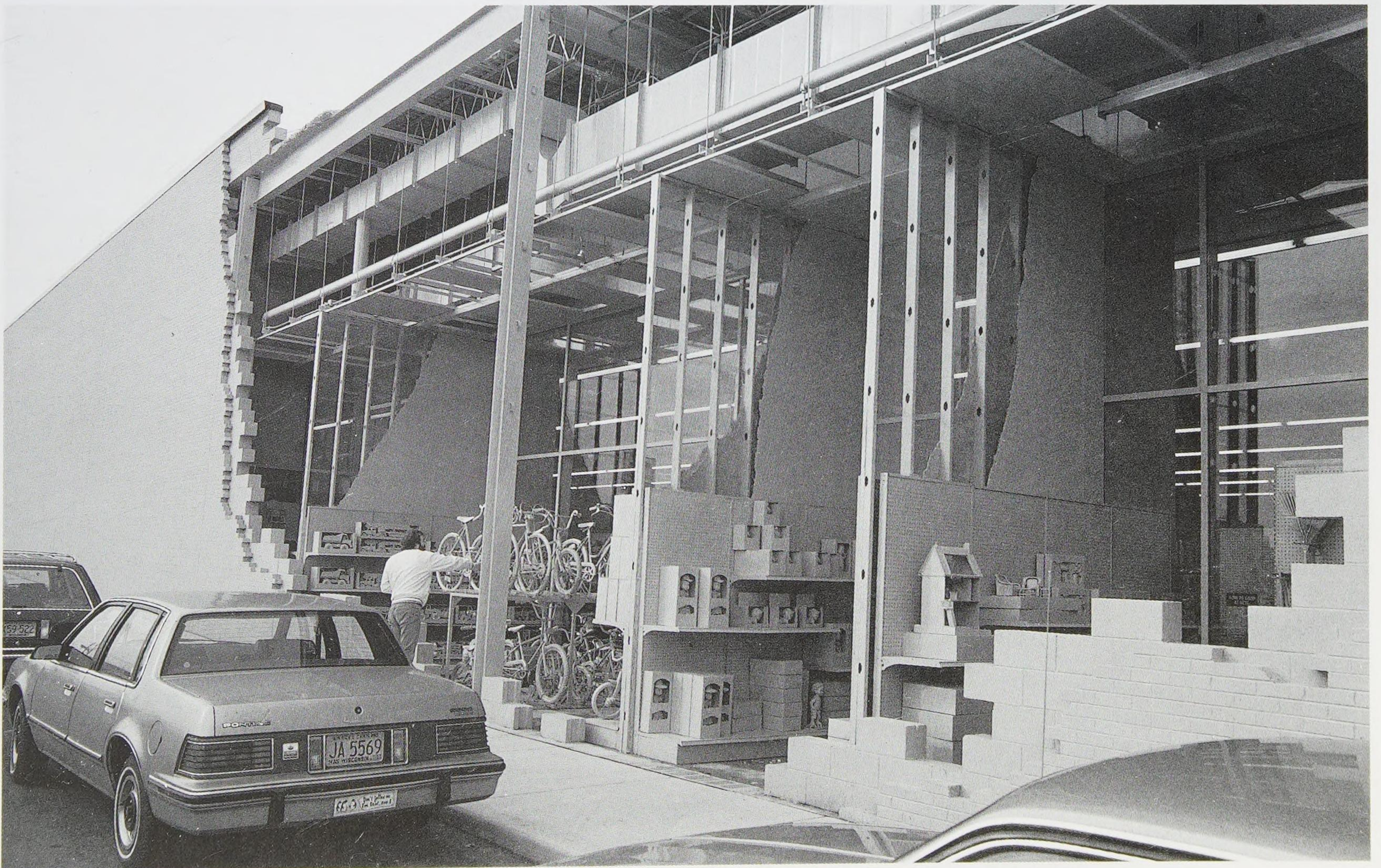


Cutaway section revealing showroom silver department





General views of cutaway side wall





View of inside/outside layers

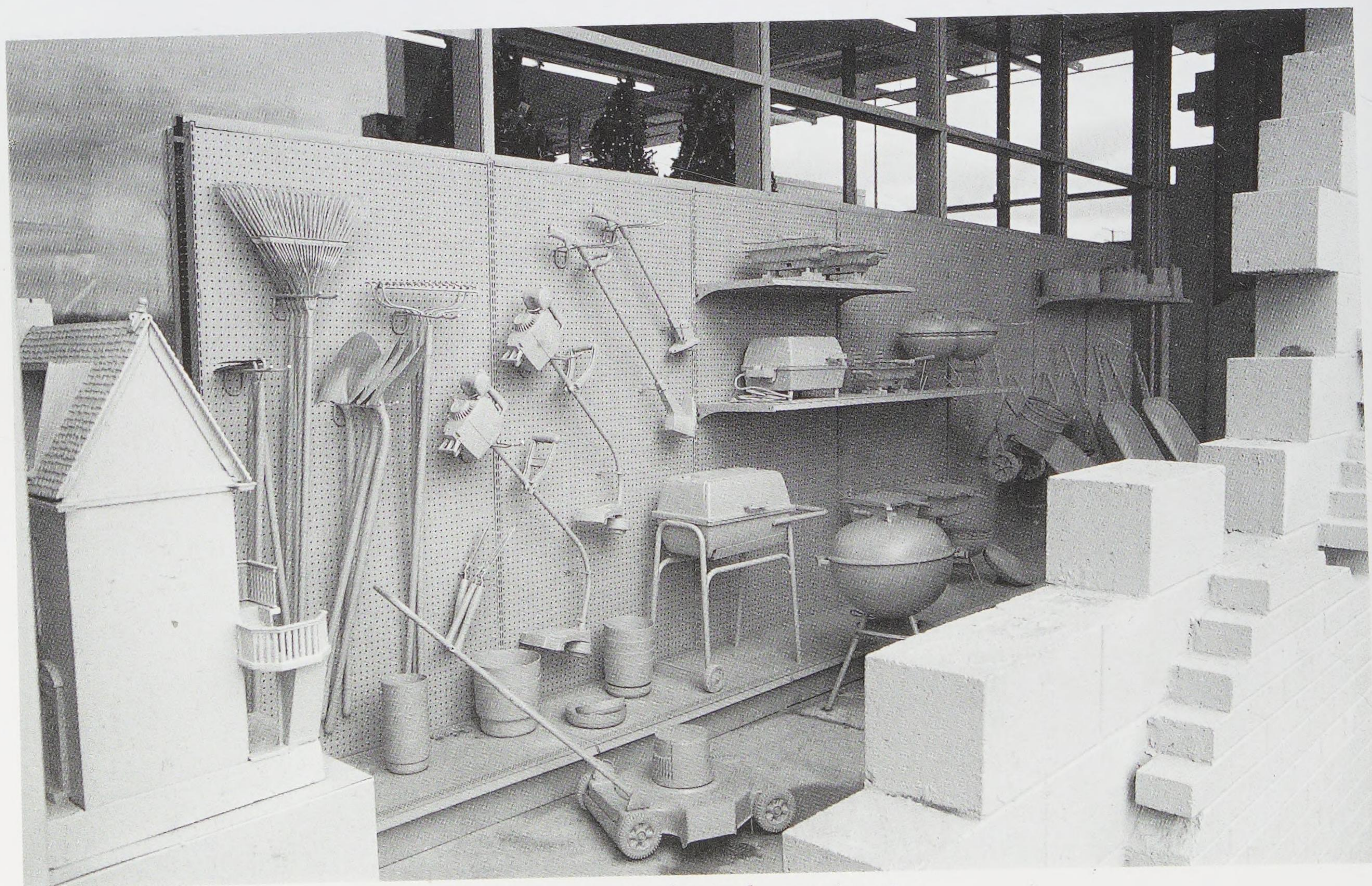


Views of inside/outside bicycle racks

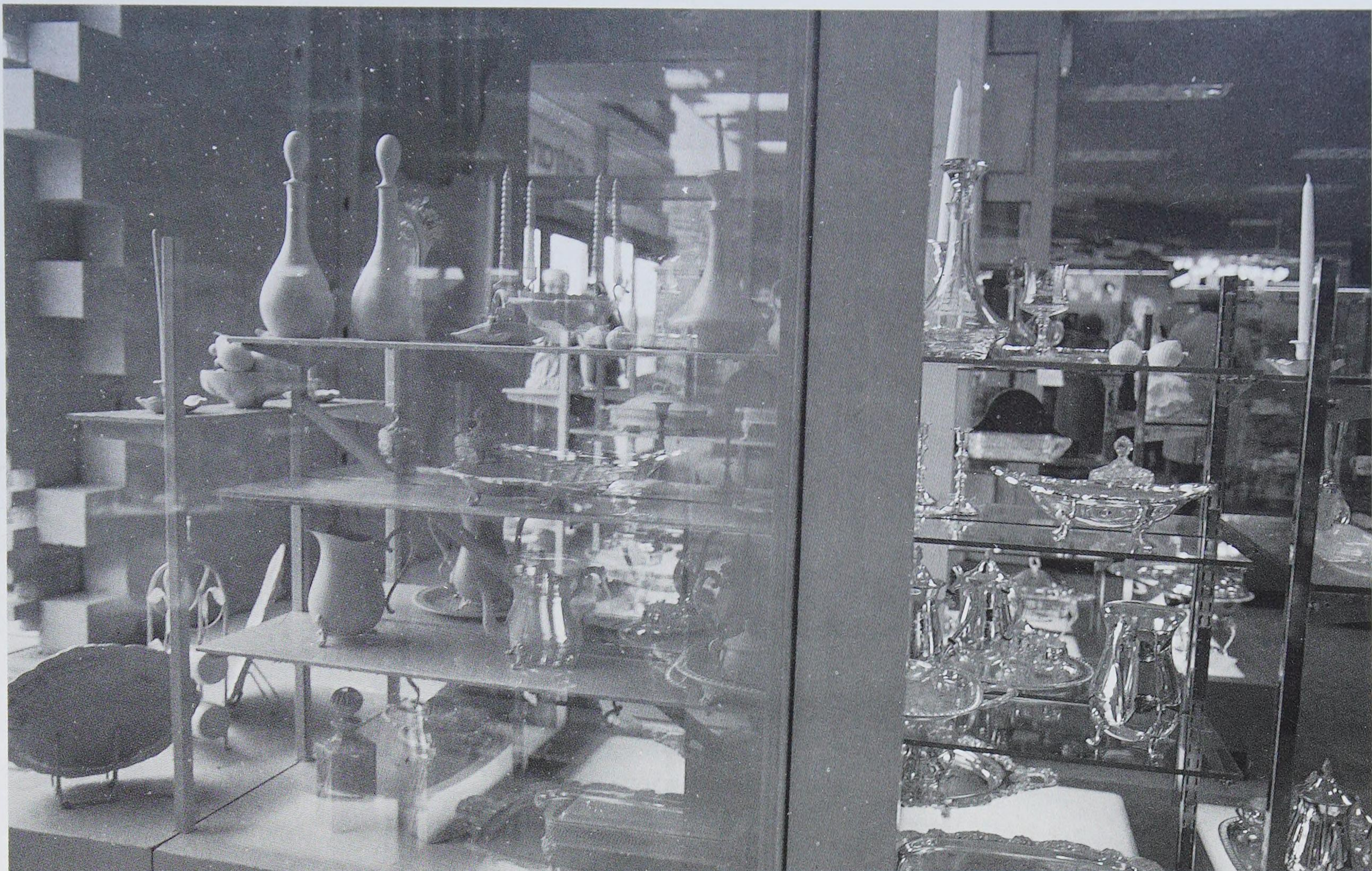




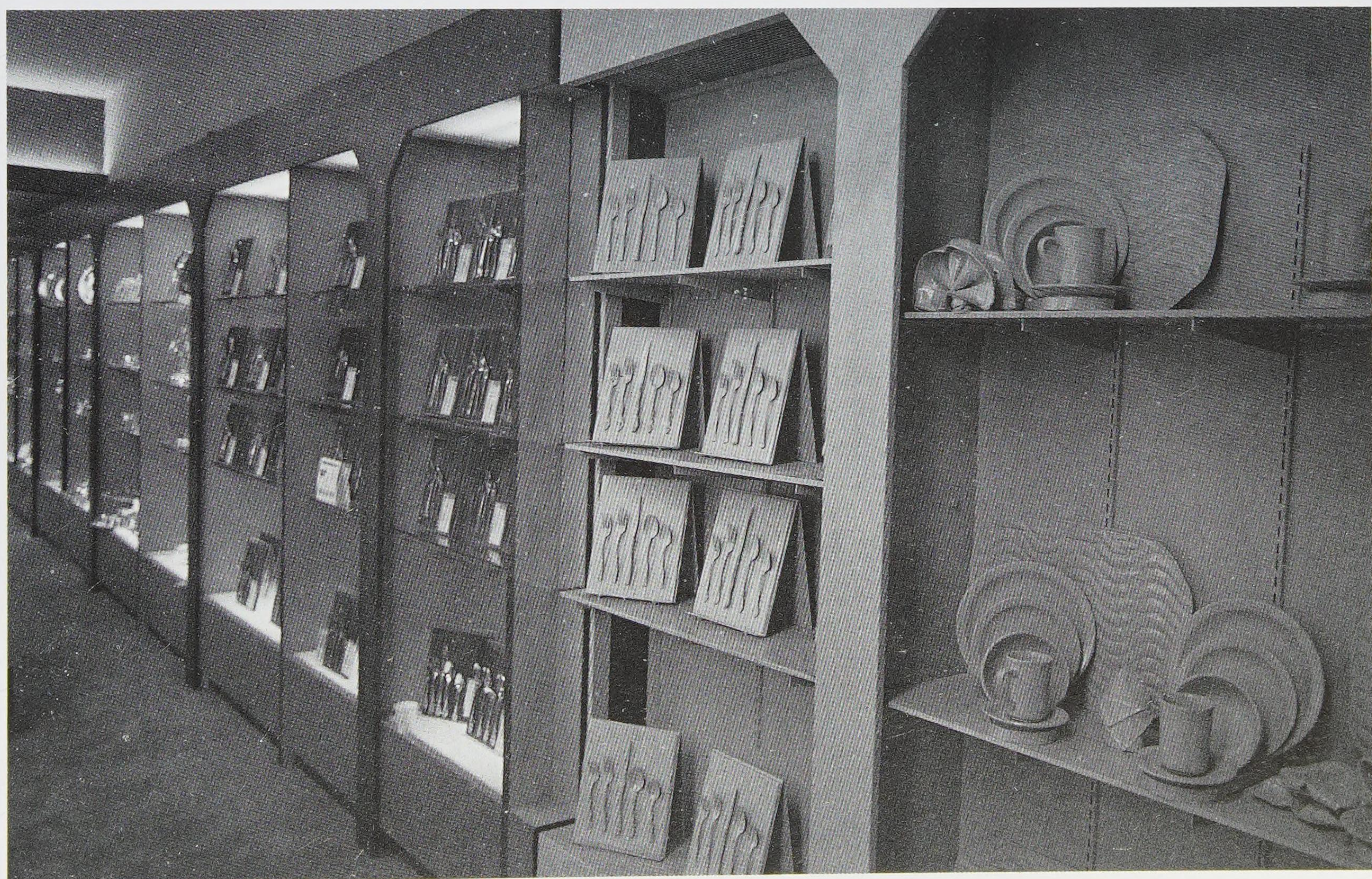
View of thermal wall bisecting toy fire truck



Cutaway section showing lawn equipment



Views of thermal wall bisecting silver department



NEW YORK BRICKWORK DESIGN CENTER

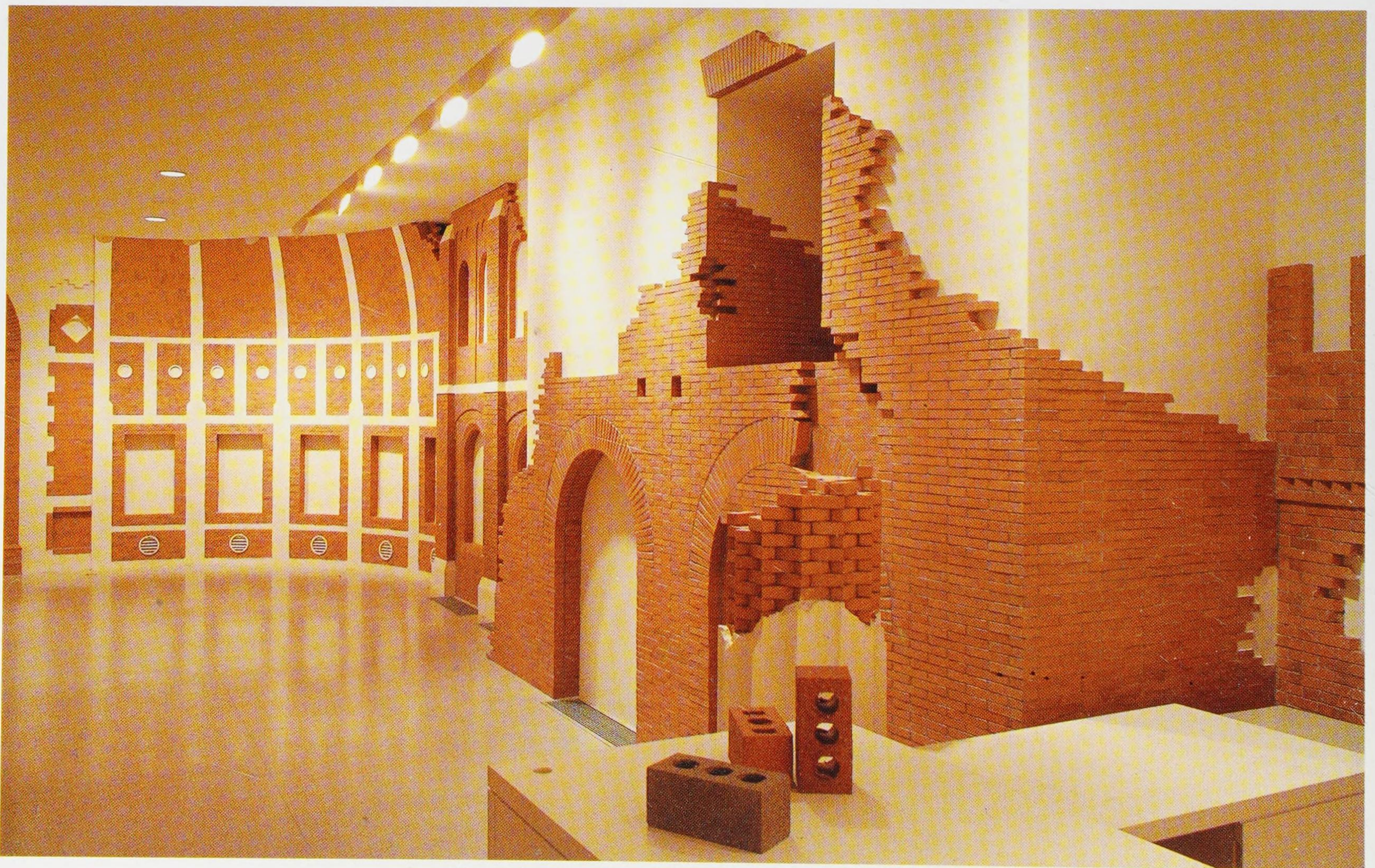
New York, New York
1985

The Glen-Gery Corporation is one of the world's largest manufacturers of brick and masonry for architectural construction, with central headquarters in England. This new design center is located in New York's historic Amster Court and is intended to exhibit all of Glen-Gery's products to best advantage, and to demonstrate the many possibilities for the uses of brick.

The entire interior of the showroom is built out of one-half-scale brick, specially created by Glen-Gery for this project. More than a dozen historically accurate styles of masonry, arranged in a series of sequentially ordered mini-environments and suggested monuments from ancient shelter to present-day high rise, are used to illustrate the

evolutionary changes and inventions in brick during the past 3,000 years. These tableaux are made intentionally ambiguous to avoid the anecdotal. Beginning with the creation of the first bricks, the displays move from Egypt and the pyramids to the Great Wall of China, then to Greek and Roman temples, Byzantine and Gothic churches, Renaissance palaces, Baroque and Neoclassical structures, and examples of 19th-century Victorian, Art Nouveau, early modern, and Art Deco styles, finally concluding with the present, represented by postmodernist skyscrapers.

As a result of the scale established by the small brick, the real masonry products of Glen-Gery take on a dynamic and heroic presence.



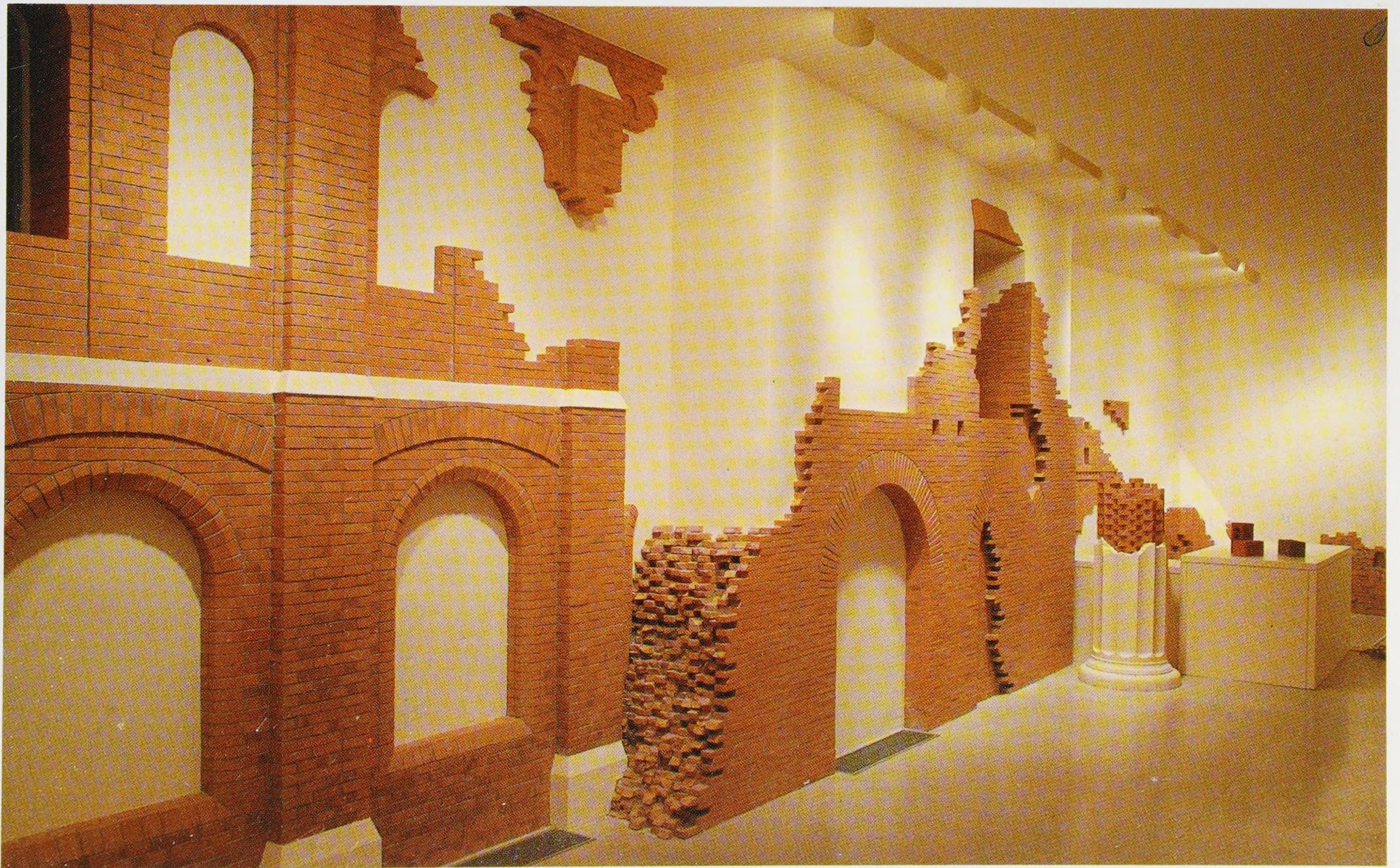
General view of one-half-scale brickwork history



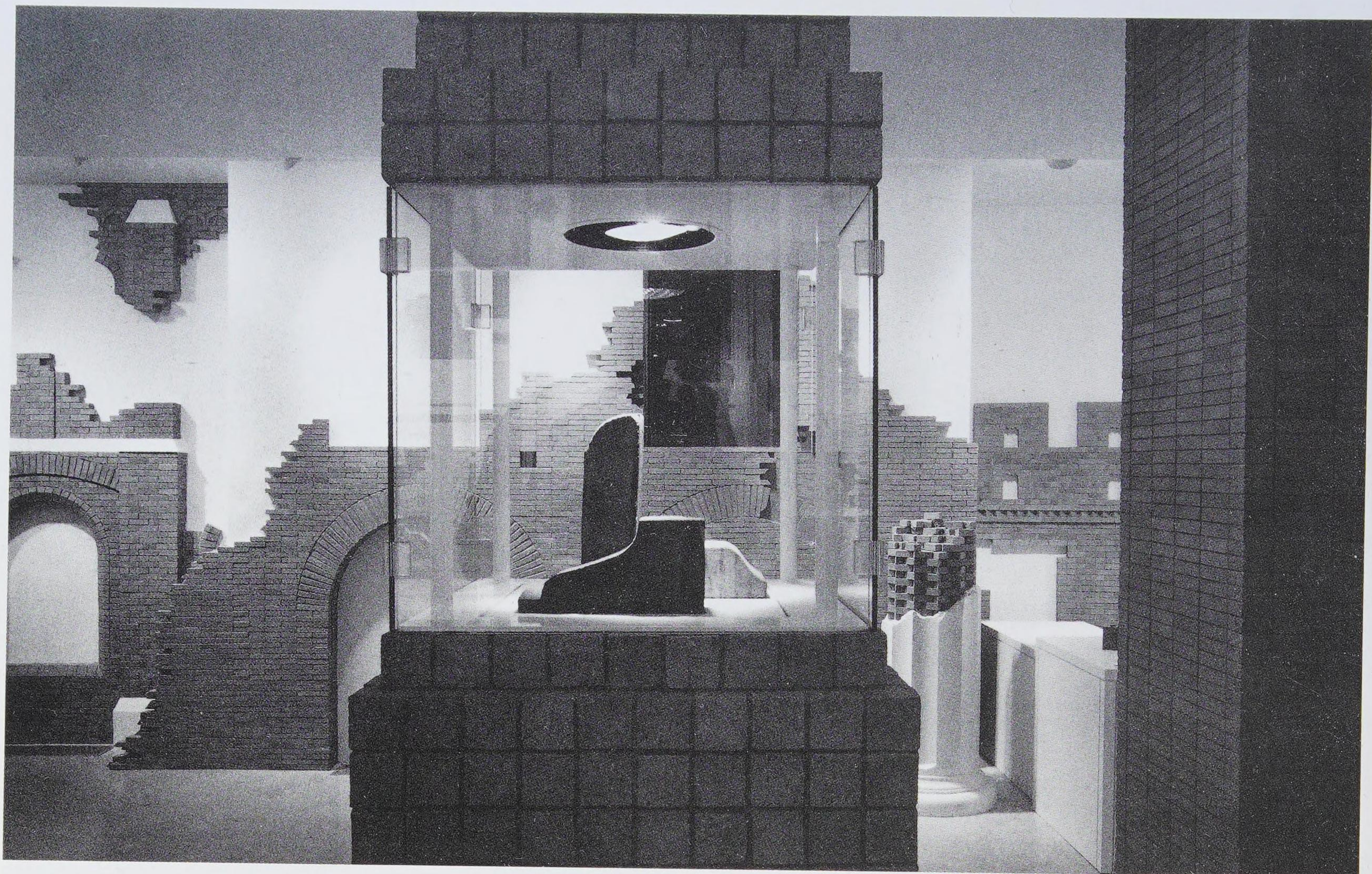
Renaissance wall



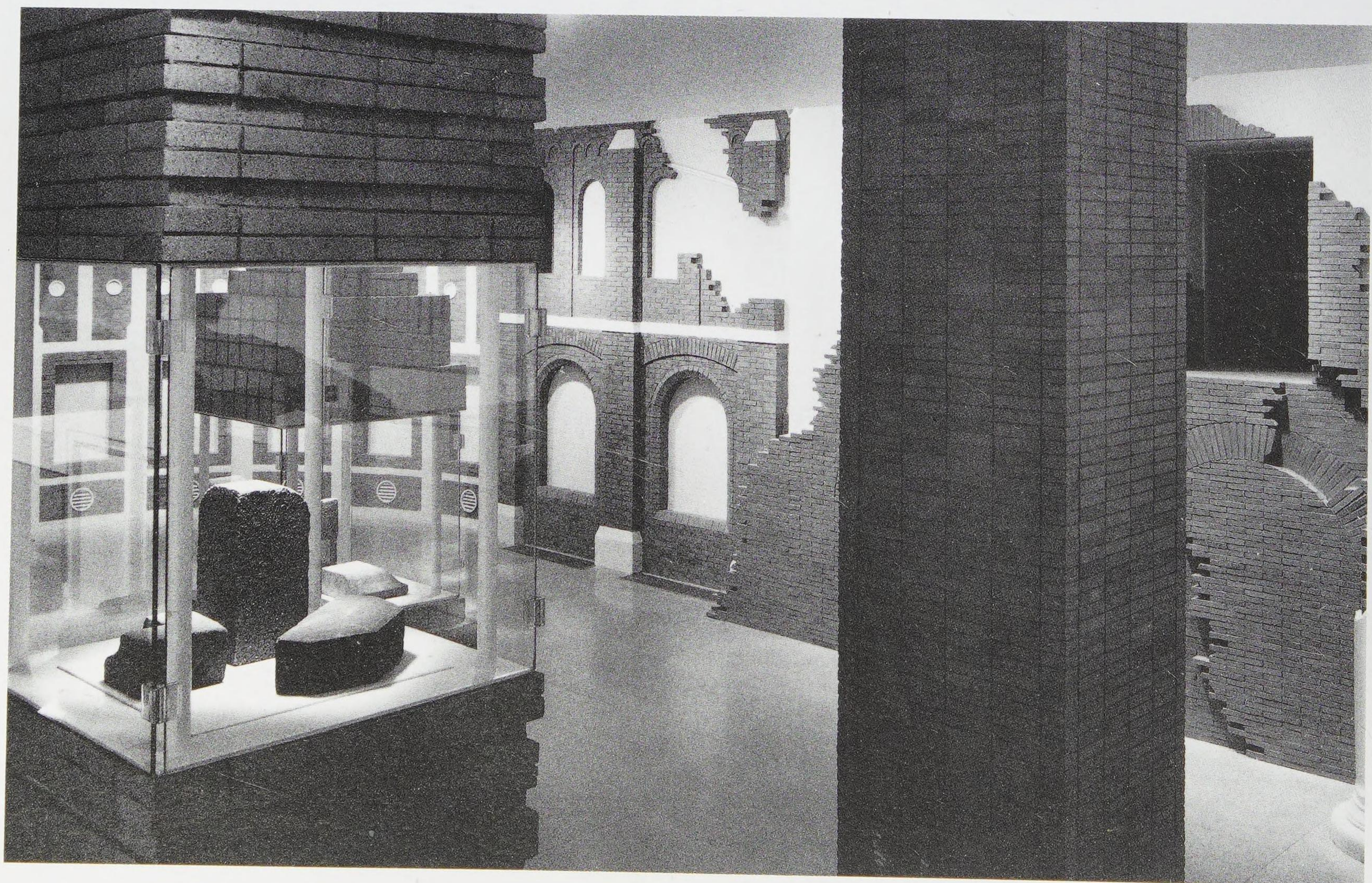
Detail showing construction of classical column

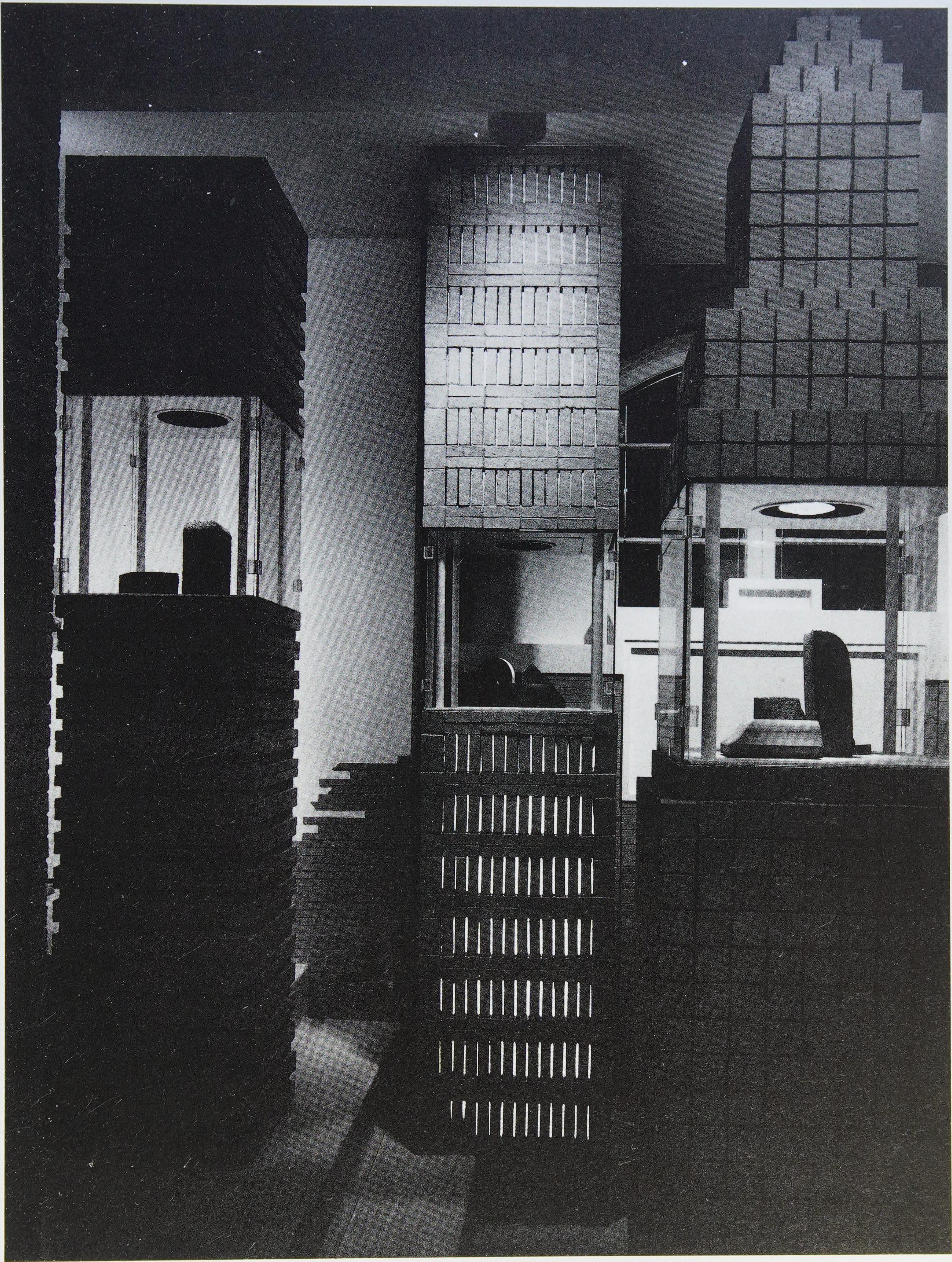


View of medieval, Roman, and Greek brickwork



General interior views

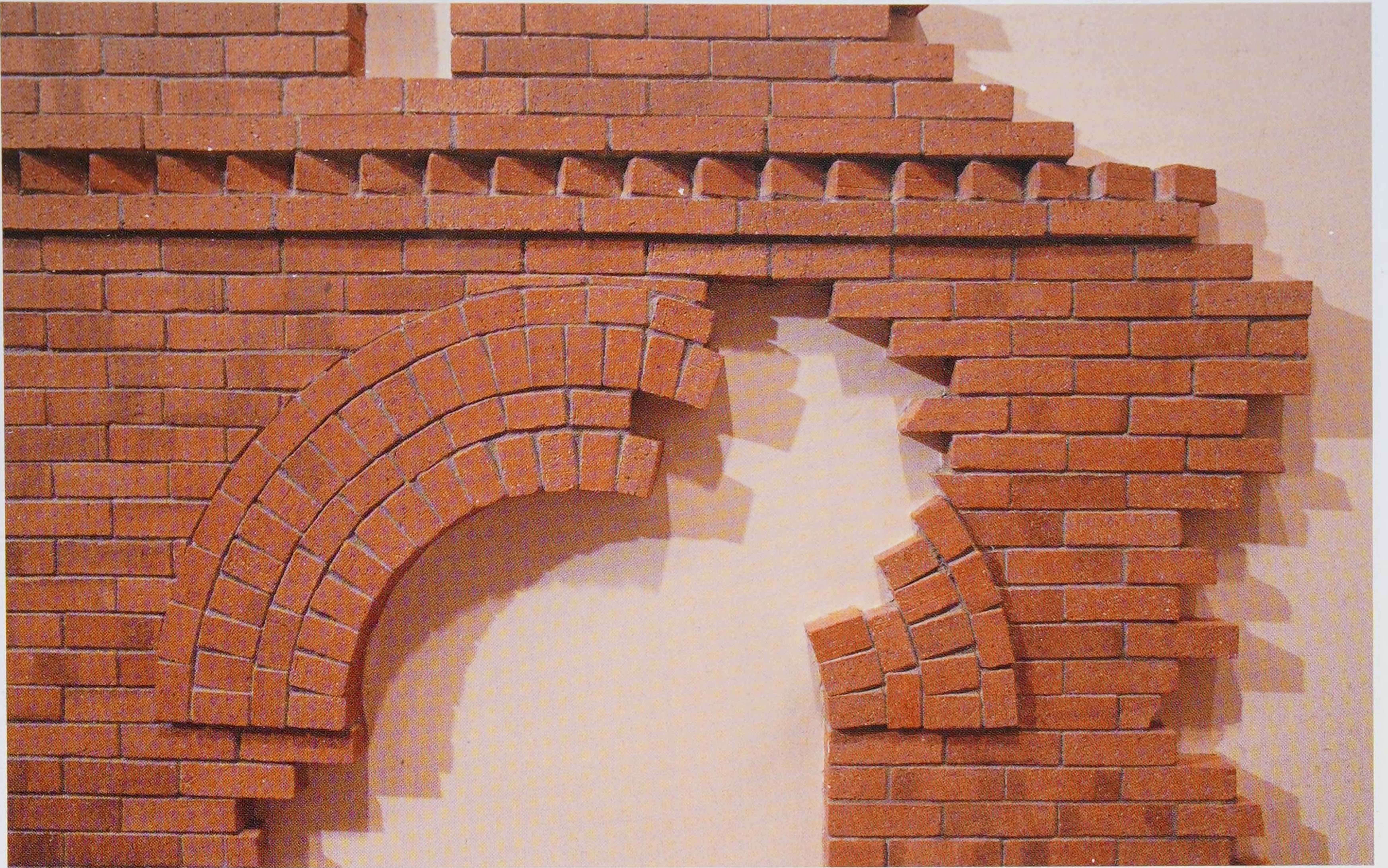




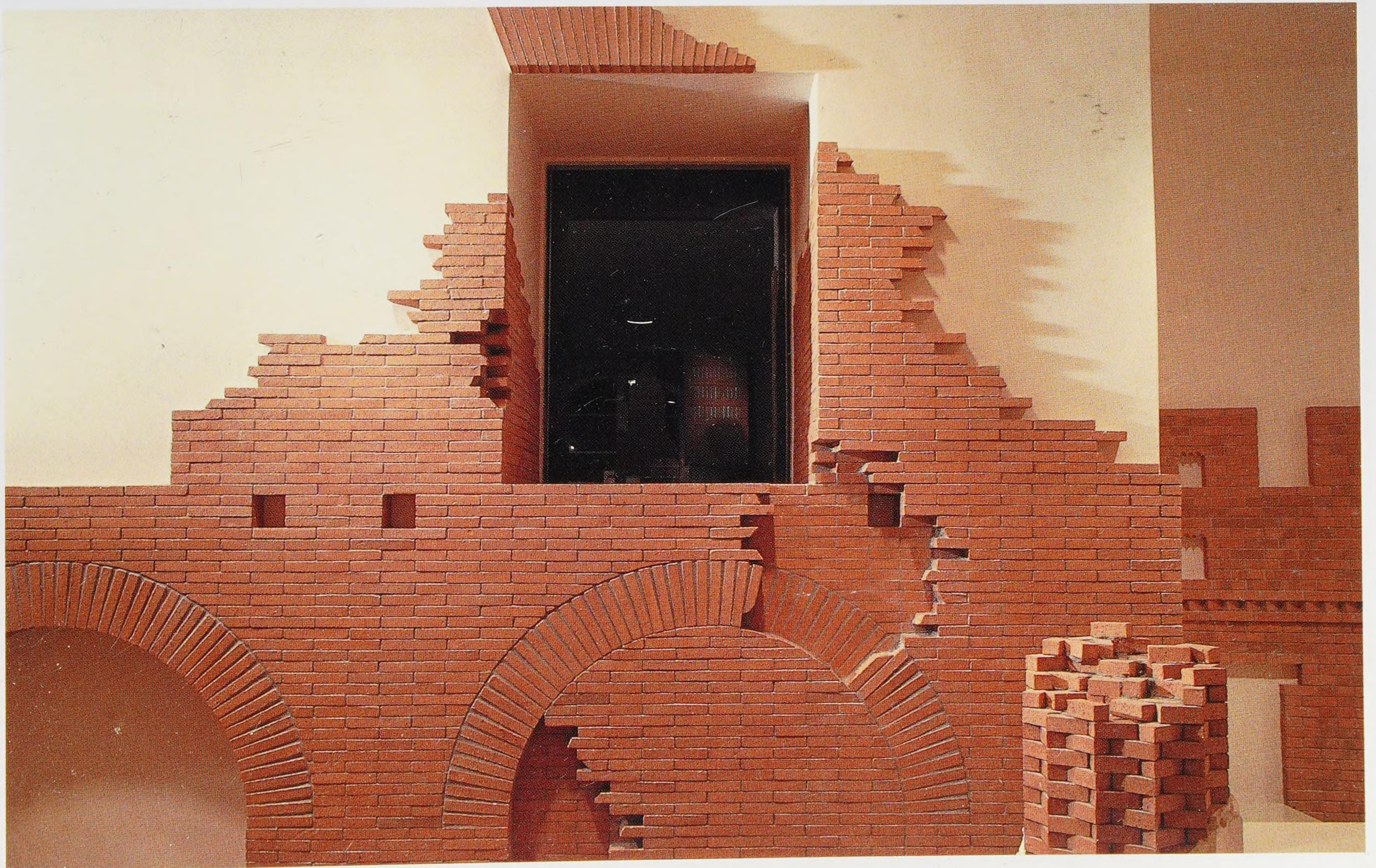
View of highrise display towers for showing current brick styles



Details of one-half-scale Romanesque brickwork



Details of Romanesque, Roman, and Greek brickwork



SITE STUDIO AND OFFICES

New York, New York

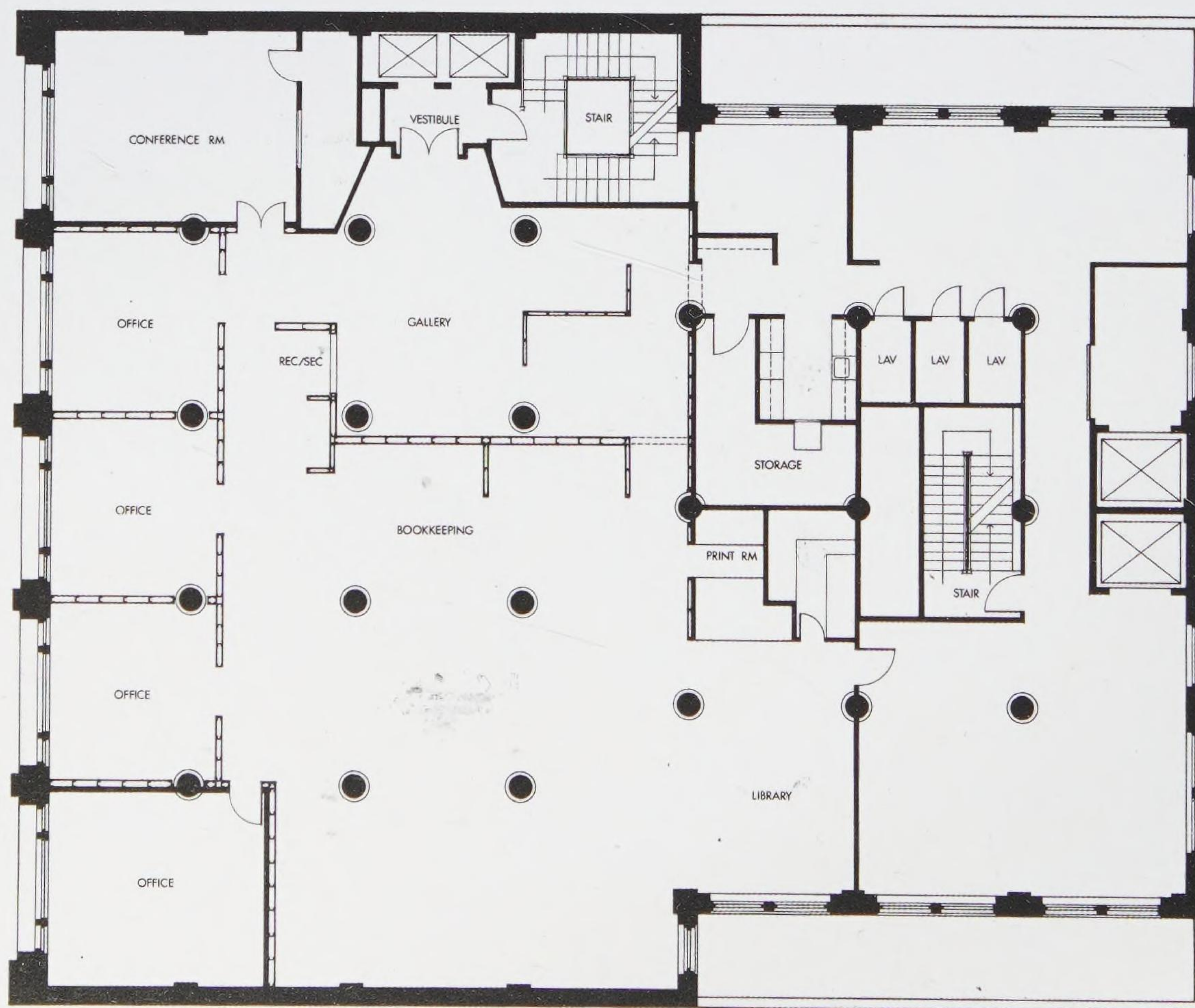
1984

The Bayard-Condict Building, completed in 1898, is the only example of Louis Sullivan's architecture in New York City. Commissioned by the United Loan and Investment Company, the ornate terra-cotta facade is a historic landmark. The building's only loft with original decorative details is the floor now occupied by SITE.

In the renovation of the new SITE office and gallery (for models and drawings), the intention was to retain the open feeling necessary for the creative interaction of a collaborative group, provide unlimited surface for hanging artworks, and preserve the original character of the space. Occupied by a factory until 1983, the interior was partially destroyed. As a result, great care was taken to restore the original plaster walls, ceiling, and ornate Sullivan capitals on the columns.

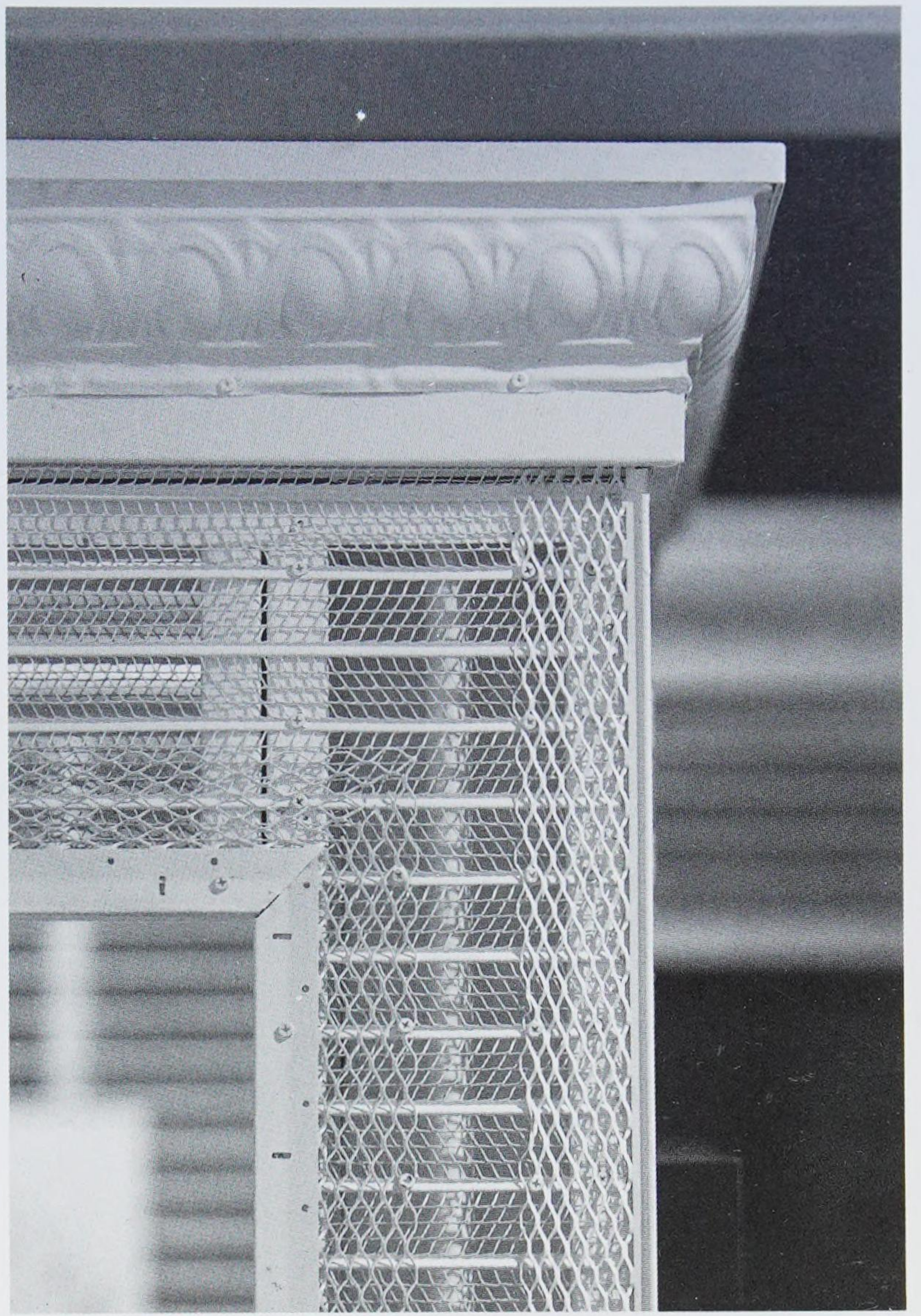
Stationary walls (eight feet high in the tradition of Sullivan's interiors) with metal egg-and-dart cornices and wood bases were constructed of wire lathe over exposed metal studs. The entire space, including the wood floors and the walls, was then monochromed white to suggest a ghost of the past. The lathe walls correspond to the original industrial intentions of the building and Sullivan's decorative details.

The motion of people, blurred as they pass behind the scrimlike walls, combined with the varying densities of the walls (semitransparent to semiopaque) resulting from the changing light conditions, adds a surreal dimension to the interior. Also, these unique walls provide the opportunity to hang objects and artworks anywhere, at any height, and represent a prototype wall system currently being produced by SITE for museum use.

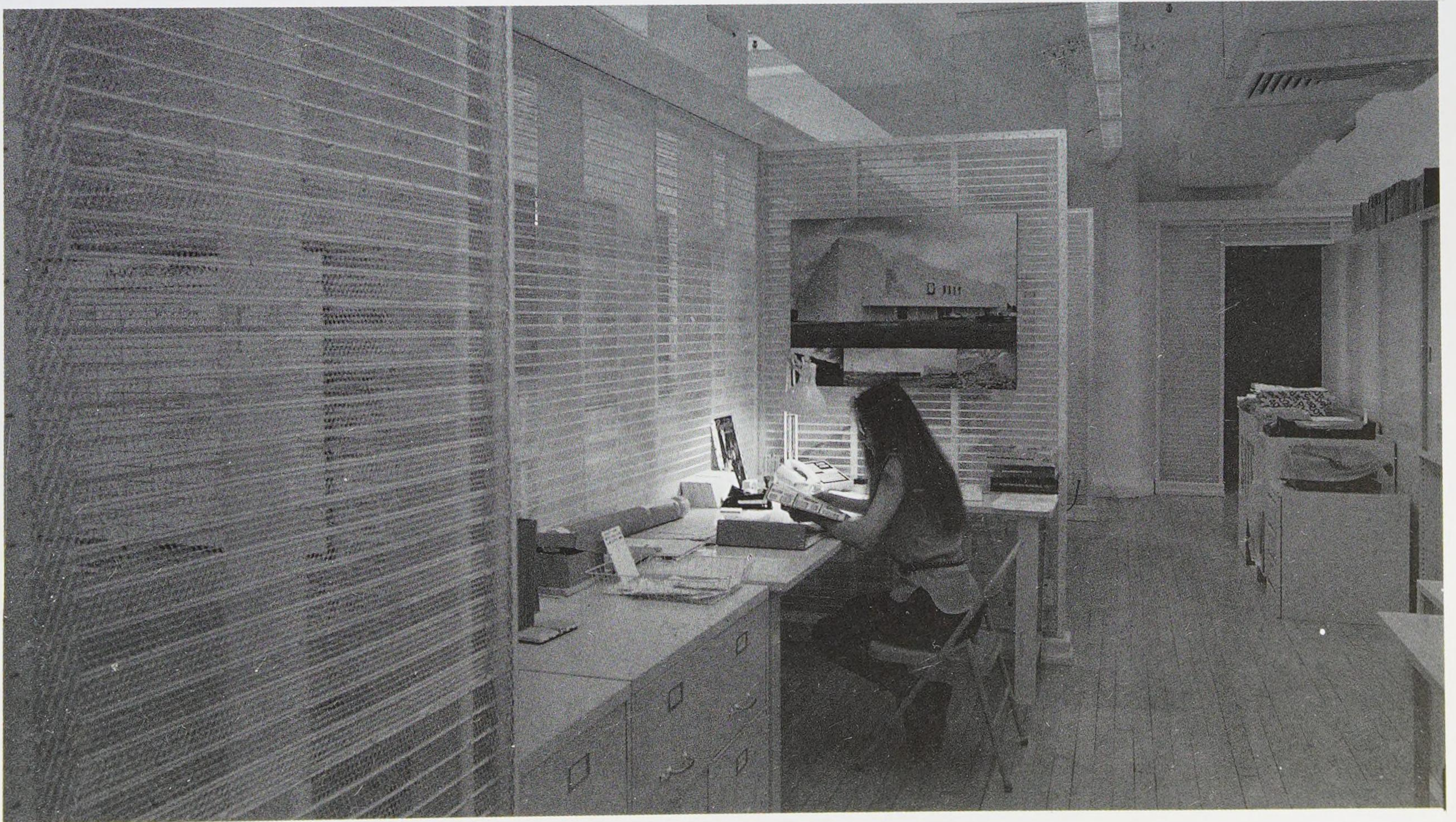


SECOND FLOOR PLAN
0 5 10

Plan of offices



General interior views showing exhibition and office spaces





Interior views of gallery spaces





Staff of SITE in 1987

PAZ BUILDING

Brooklyn, New York

1983

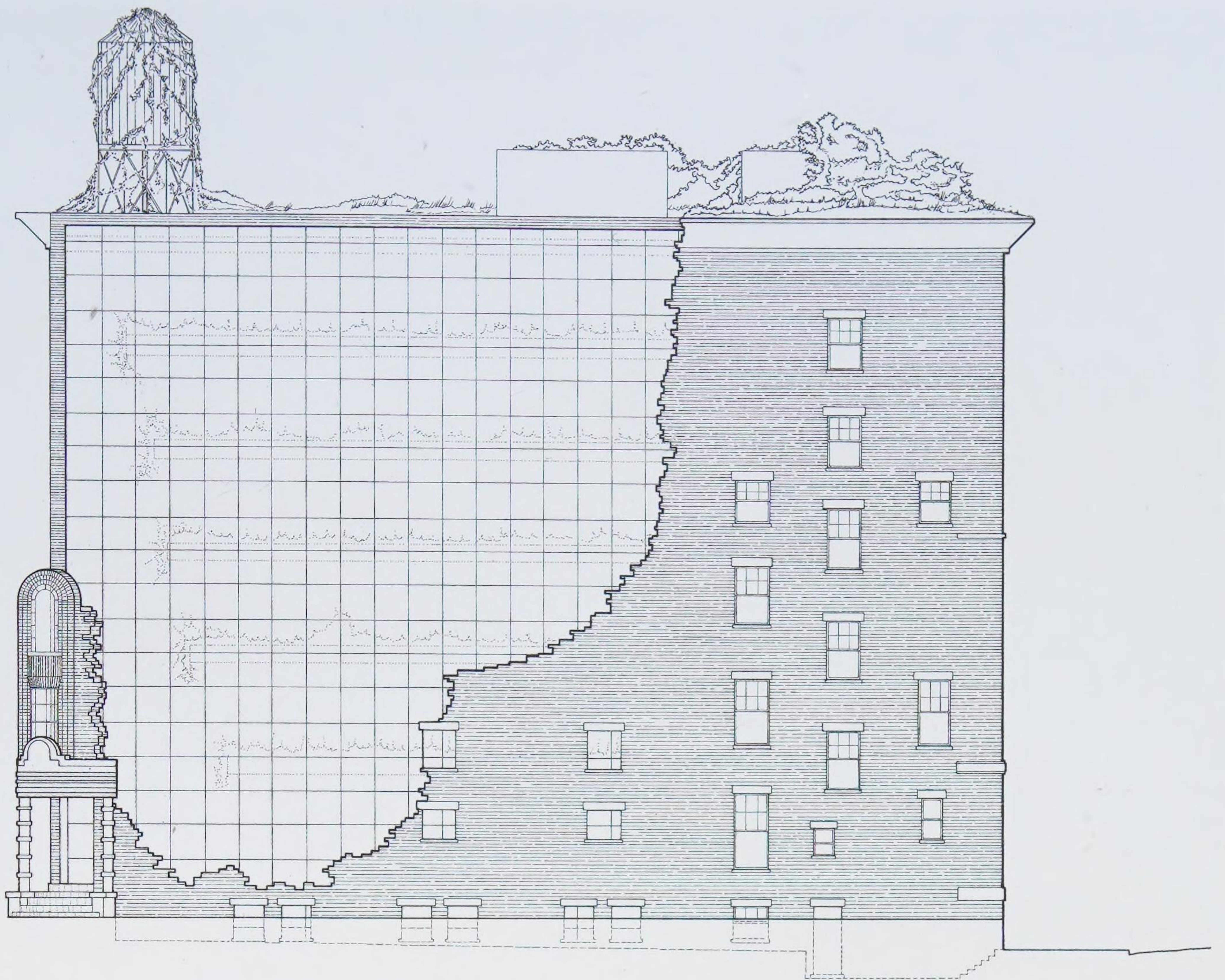
The scope of the project includes the conversion of a 55,000-square-foot 1904 YMCA building in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, to multiuse commercial space, including a restaurant, a health facility, a bank, and offices. Interior space will be expanded by the addition of a new 20,000-square-foot glass and steel enclosure on the east side, facing the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway.

The SITE concept was developed in response to the client's desire to have this converted building stand as a gateway project, symbolizing Williamsburg's dynamic state of renewal and its unique blend of Hasidic and Hispanic cultures. Although the structure is to be used for commercial purposes, SITE felt that its imagery should reflect the general spirit of the community, with its conditions of contrast. For example, such themes as old/new, decay/rebirth, worldly/religious, and closed/expansive seem to be more visually evident in Williamsburg than in any other neighborhood in New York.

These themes are carried throughout the exterior and

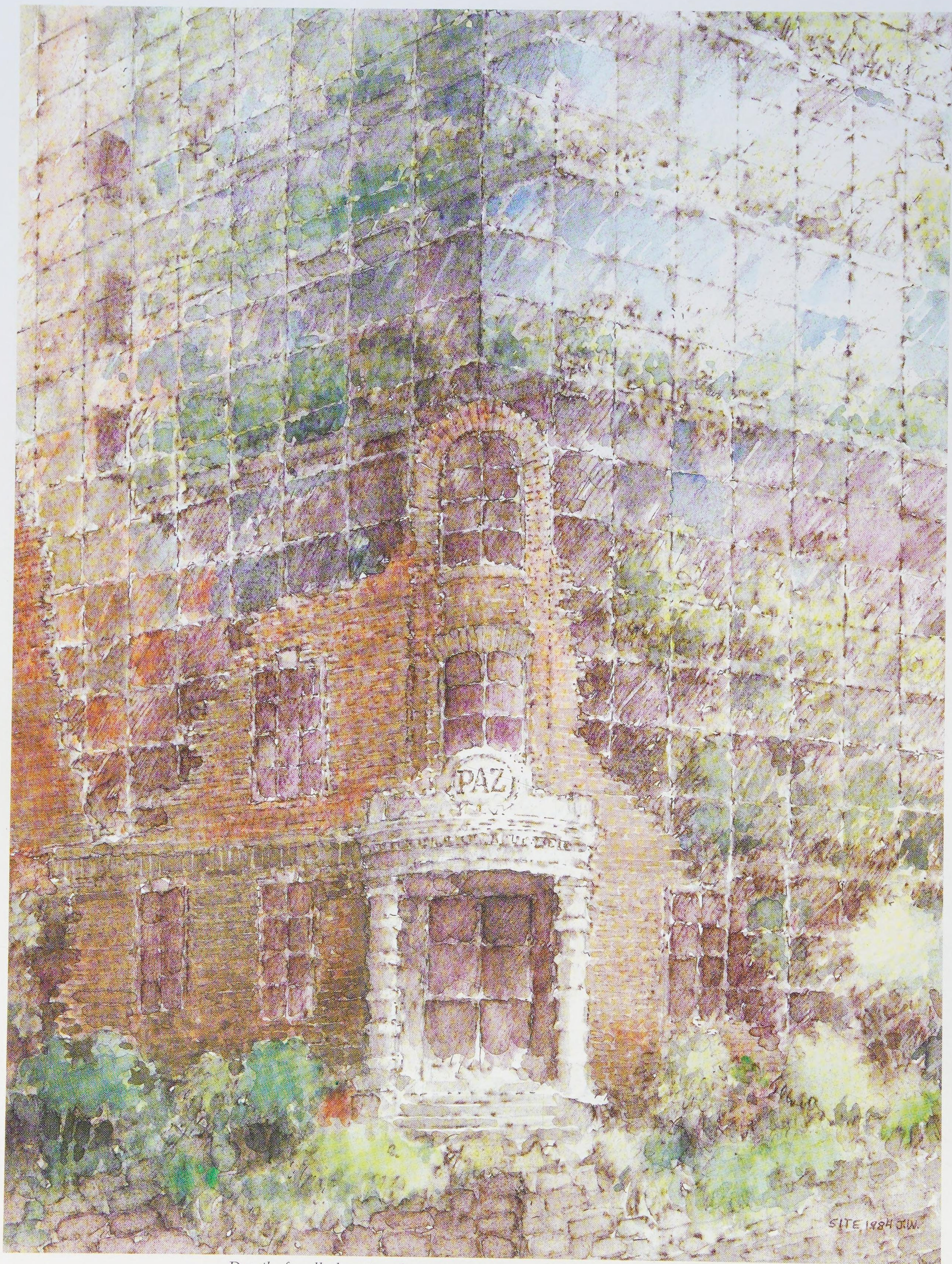
the interior, the adjacent gardens, and the parking facilities. Interior decorative details remaining from the original YMCA design are preserved and integrated. The two major concrete portals located on the Marcy Avenue side of the old building are recast into duplicates and inserted on the east elevation as a way of unifying historical references, alluding to the House of Abraham (with its four welcoming entrances), and establishing a symbolic point of entry to Williamsburg for the outside world.

In order to structurally and psychologically create an architectural presence for this duality, the new office building is designed to emerge from the old YMCA center as if by some miraculous resurrection. This is accomplished by cutting away sections of the existing gymnasium wall on the east elevation facing the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, leaving a raw-edged masonry profile. The addition of a glass and steel tower rises out of this fragmented contour, providing additional floor space and a multilevel terrarium garden.



Elevations

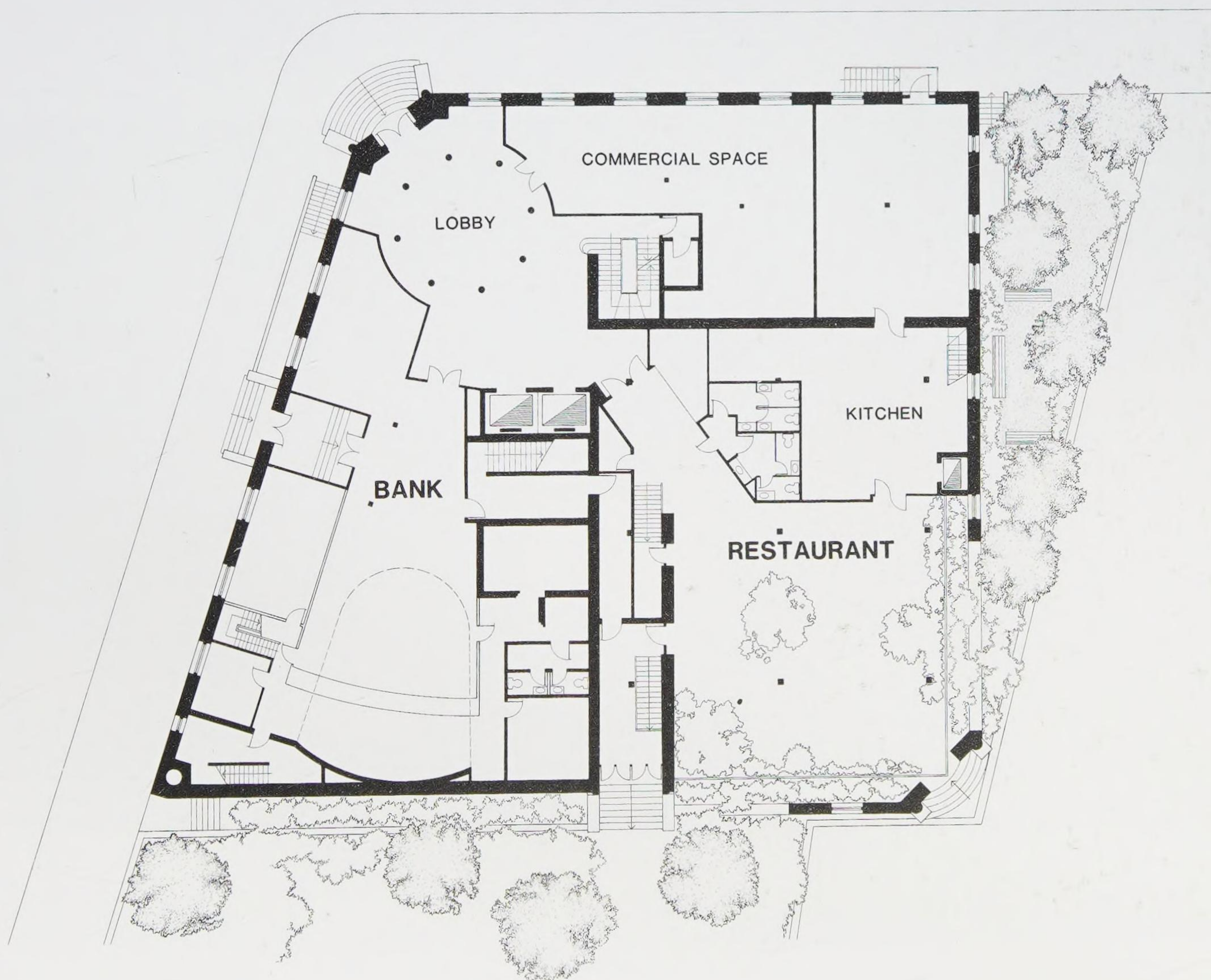




Detail of wall elevation showing intersection of old and new structures



Model showing intersection of existing and new structures



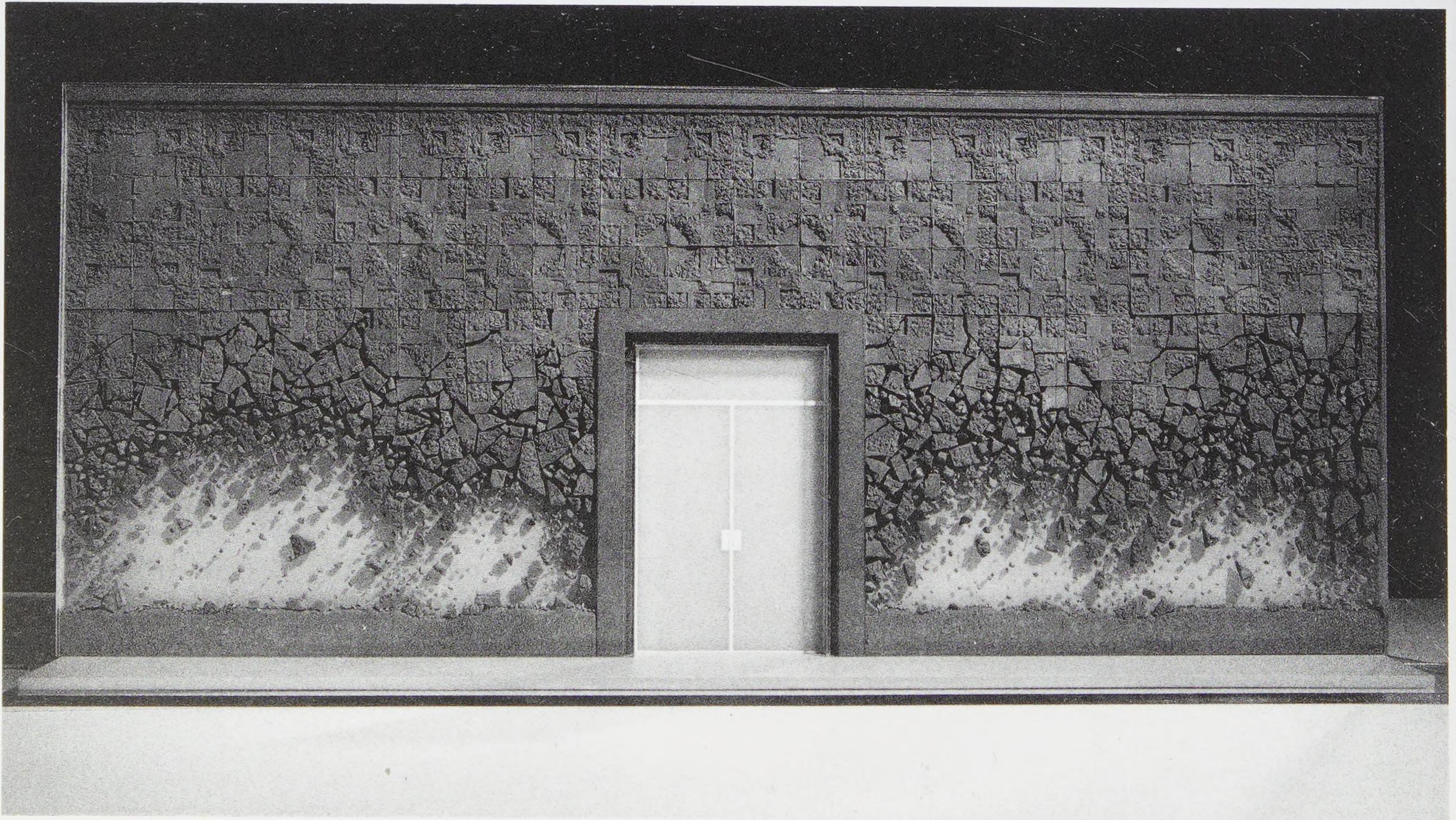
FROZEN ARCHAEOLOGY

Undetermined site
1985

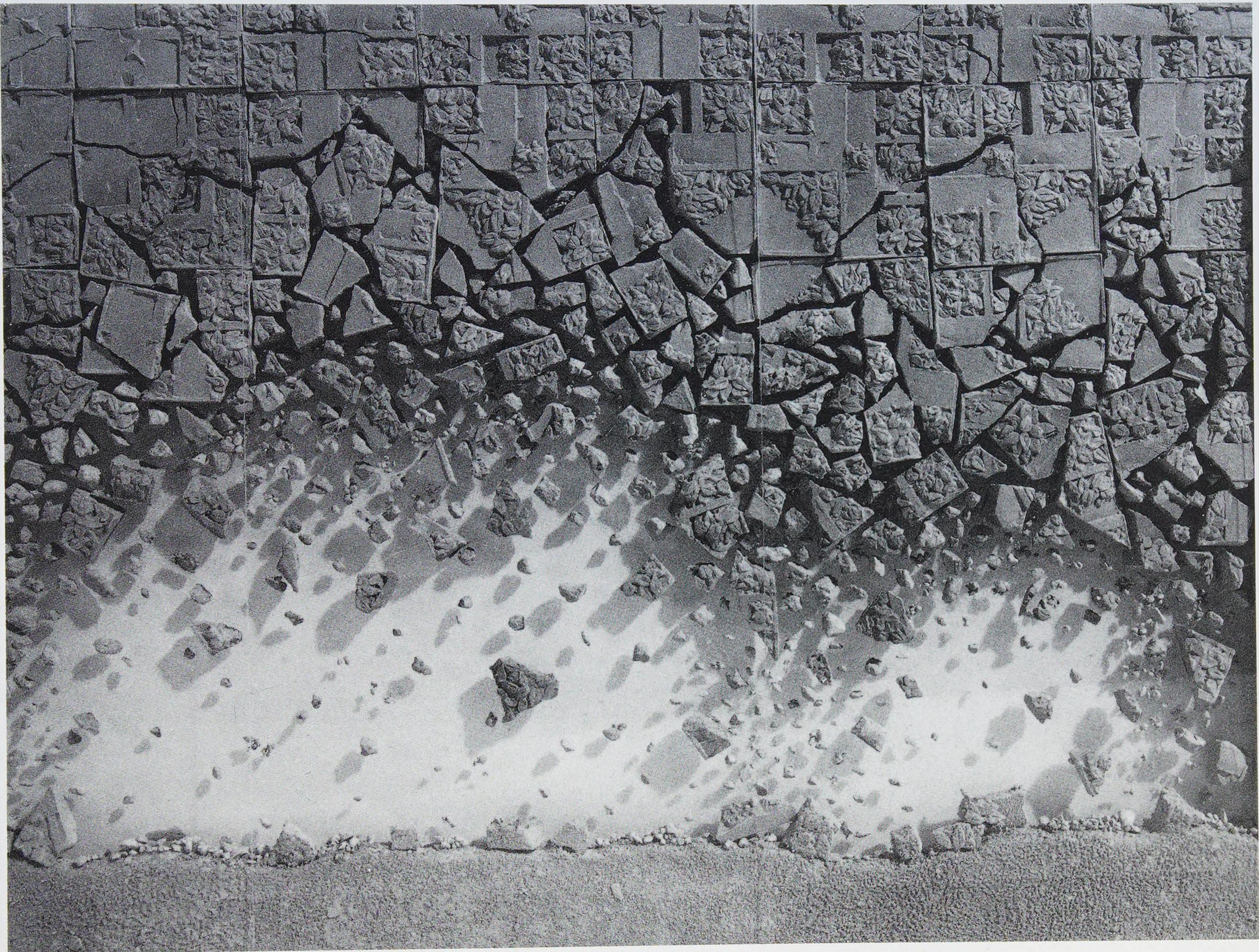
SITE was given this award-winning ceramic tile to demonstrate how it might be installed in an architectural setting. Because the tile design is decorative and historical, it seemed appropriate to use it in a situation based on some form of tension between past and present. The decision was to create an archaeological context that could serve as part of a standard curtain-wall facade or lobby interior. The terra-cotta units compose a wall trapped between glass panels, just as ancient fragments might be mounted in a natural history museum showcase. To add a surreal dimension to the project, the tiles are progressively shattered toward the lower part of the wall and the pieces are suspended in space, giving

the illusion of a frozen explosion (or perhaps even a humorous commentary on Goethe's characterization of architecture as "frozen music").

The concept is consistent with SITE's interests in narrative architecture and the use of buildings as an extension of certain sociological, psychological, and phenomenological themes like fragmentation, mutation, entropy, inversion, indeterminacy, and chance. In this case, SITE was given a formal tile design, with the inherent implication that the piece should be used in a conventional postmodern way. By deviating from the original purpose, the SITE treatment offers the premise for a new identity.



Model of section of ceramic tile wall



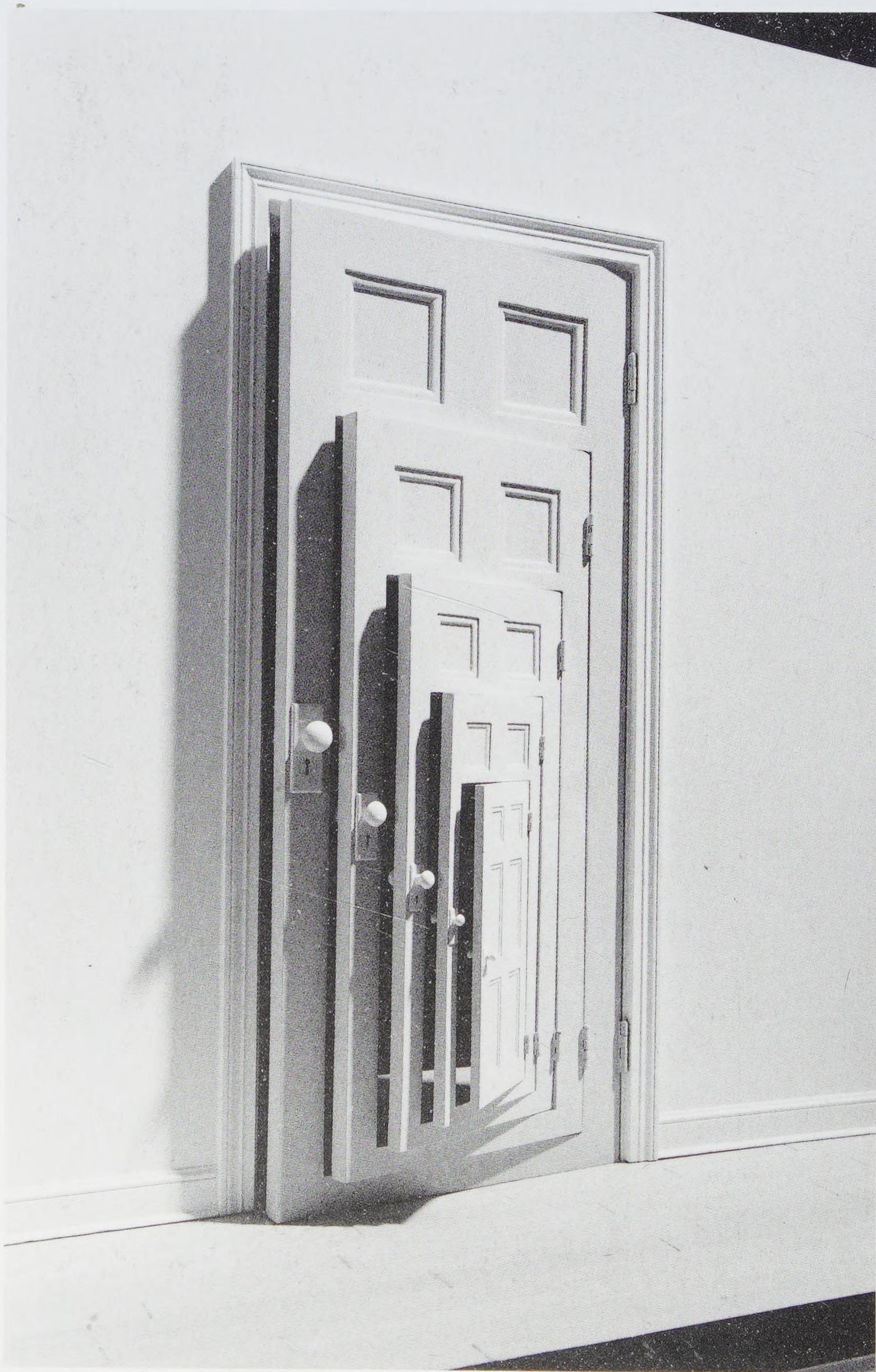
Detail of wall section

DOOR WITHIN A DOOR WITHIN A DOOR WITHIN A DOOR WITHIN A DOOR WITHIN A DOOR

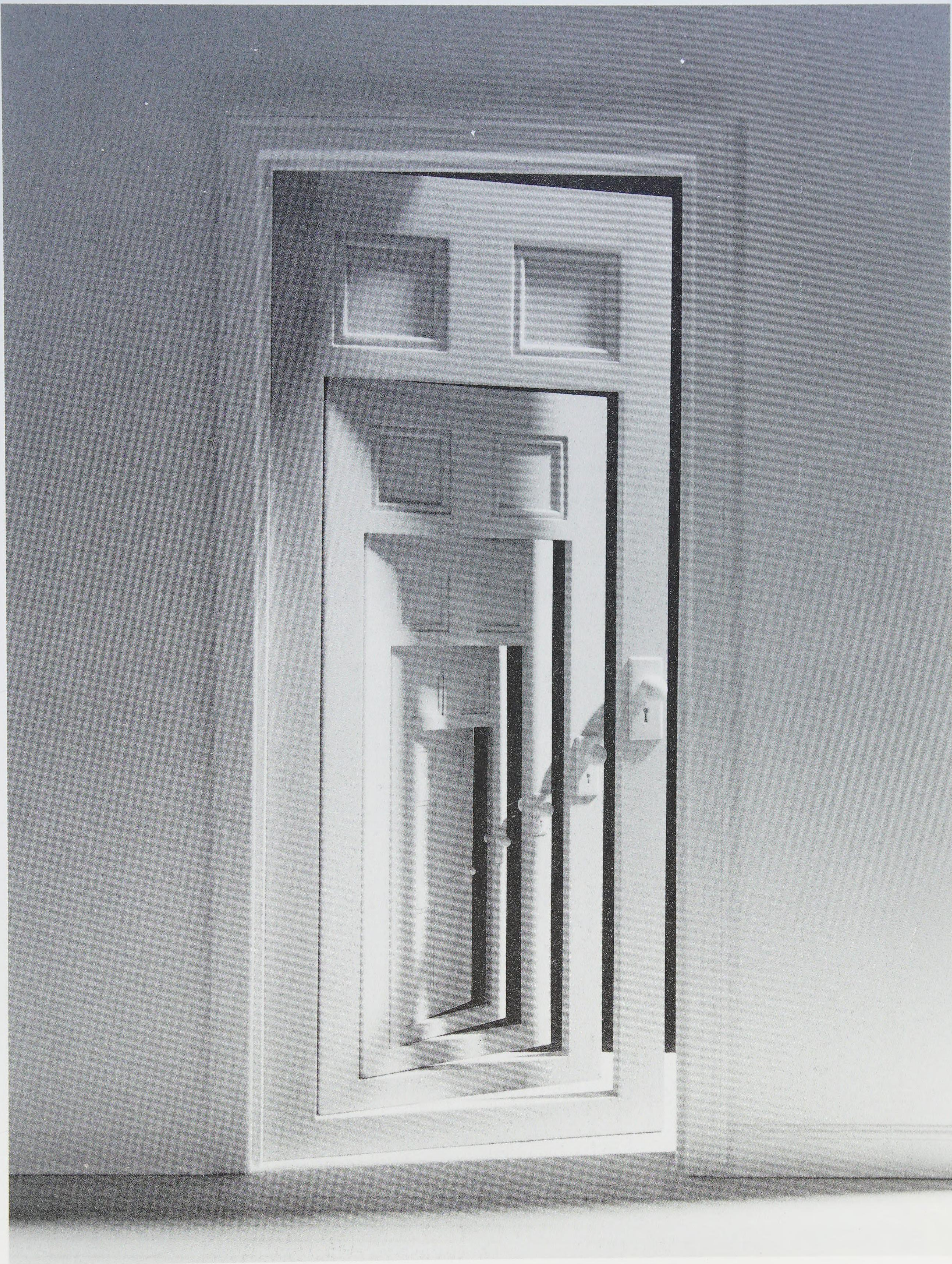
1986

SITE has been concerned with the development of furniture that falls outside of the usual categories of seating, office systems, lighting, and so on. Design development has begun for a series of doors, based on the view that doors exist as furniture in all rooms but are usually not regarded as such.

This series deals with the narrative and psychological effects of doors. The project pictured here uses references to scale as subject matter, as well as the fascination with objects that include their own microcosms. It is made of painted wood.



Two views of door



ANSEL ADAMS CENTER

Carmel, California

1985

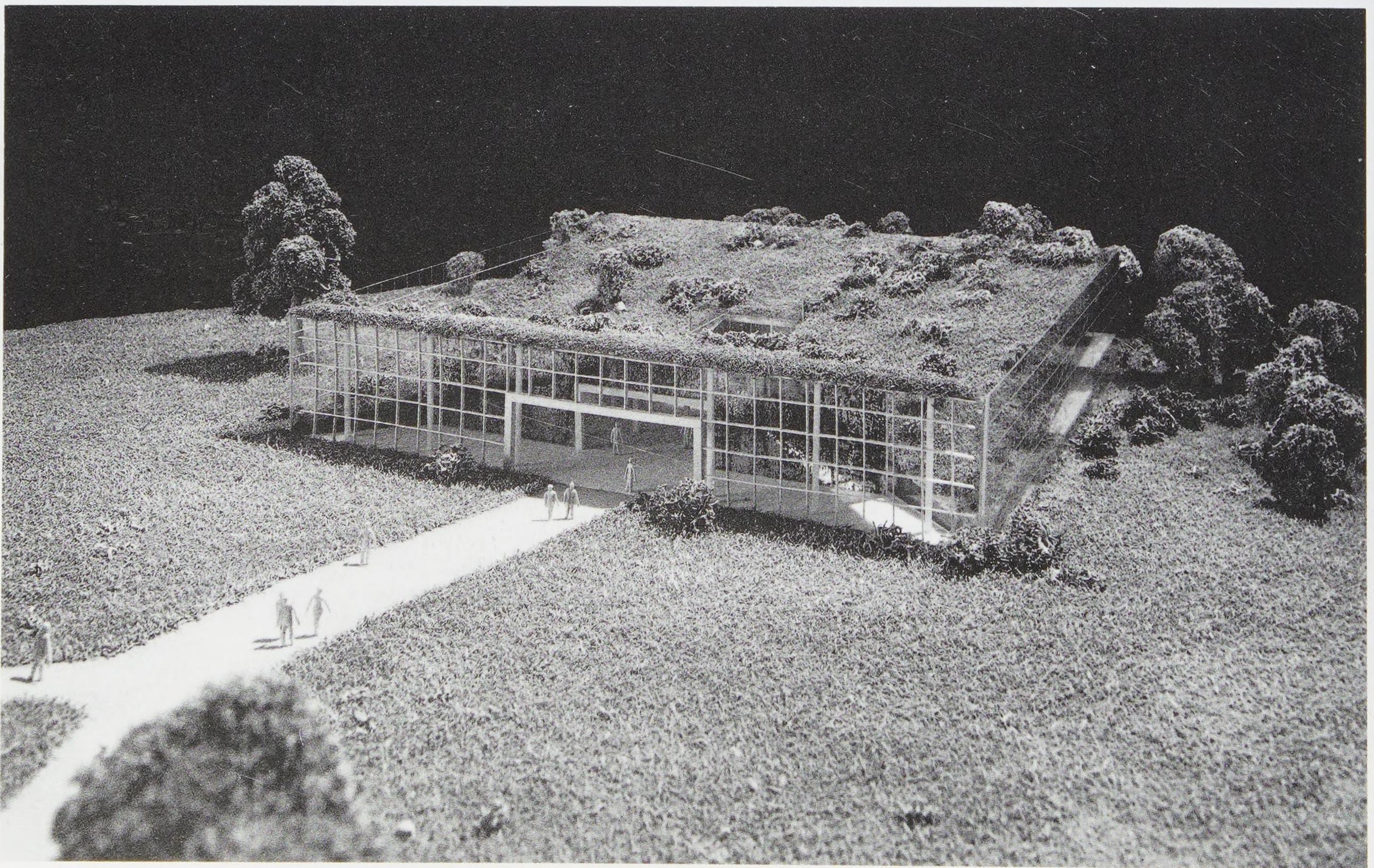
The Ansel Adams Center is a winning competition entry for a building that functions as a center for the study, exhibition, and production of creative photography and serves as a permanent tribute to the achievements of Ansel Adams.

The entire building has been conceived as a segment of a meadow that has been displaced, elevated, and utilized as shelter. Describing the structure from a narrative standpoint, it appears as though an incision has been made in the surface of the meadow and a massive plane of grass field tilted upward to form an inclined roof. In order to allow an elevated feeling and the penetration of light, a second trapezoidal section of the raised meadow has been cut away from the front elevation and slanted in the opposite direction. This second plane forms a covering for an entry plaza and establishes a camera-like shape for the total building, suggesting conditions of optical perspective.

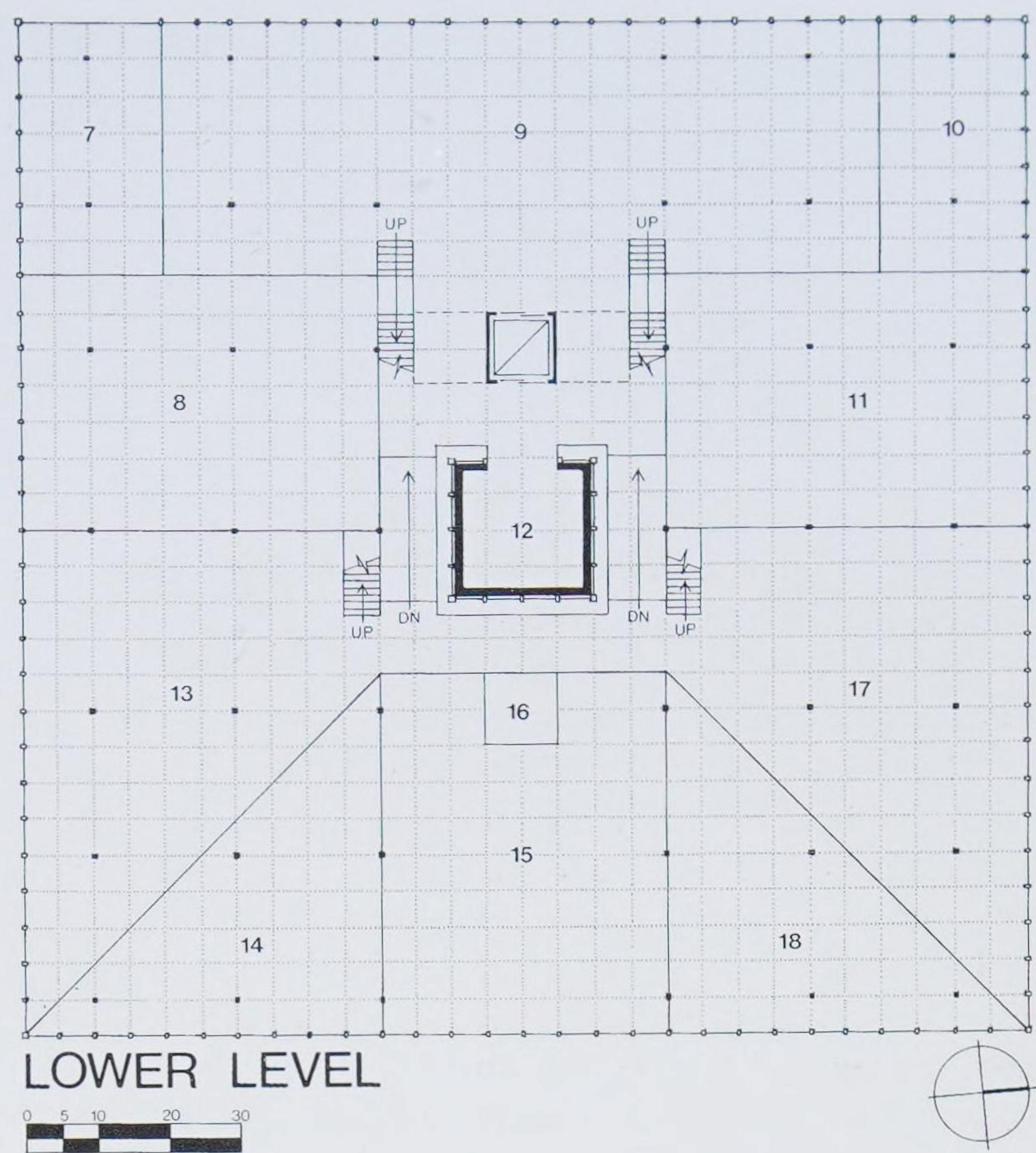
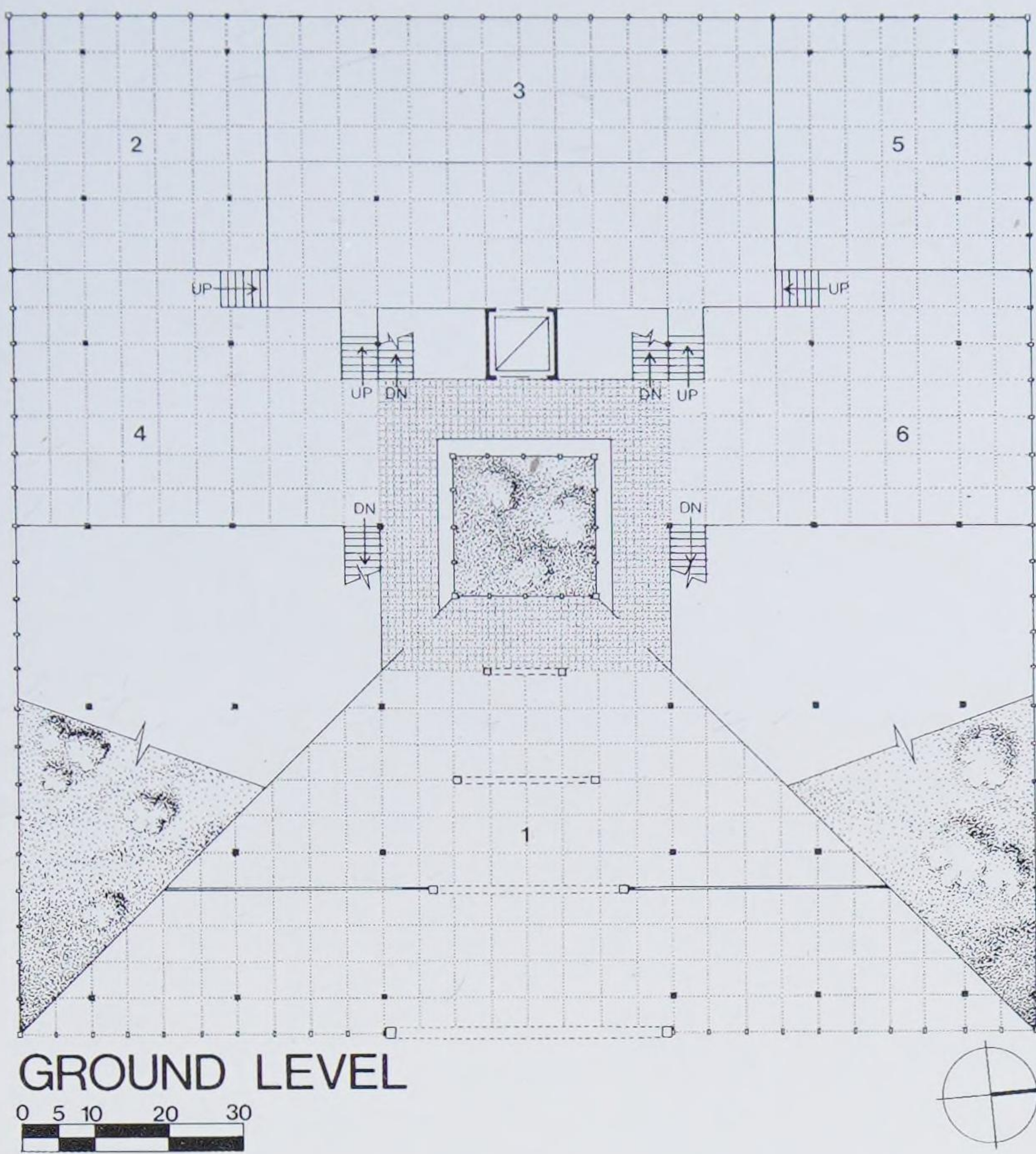
In order to sustain the two principal themes—landscape

as building and optical/camera references—the actual perimeter walls of the building are intended to function as a kind of nonarchitecture, or merely as a means of establishing the enclosure wherein the phenomenon of the elevated meadow takes place. In concert with this ephemeral purpose, the walls are made of glass and articulated in a classical grid of five-by-five-foot modules. Every aspect of the Ansel Adams Center's configuration and spatial organization is based on this grid. The structure also has a mystical, templelike quality, which seems appropriate to the metaphysical implications of so many of Adams's photographs.

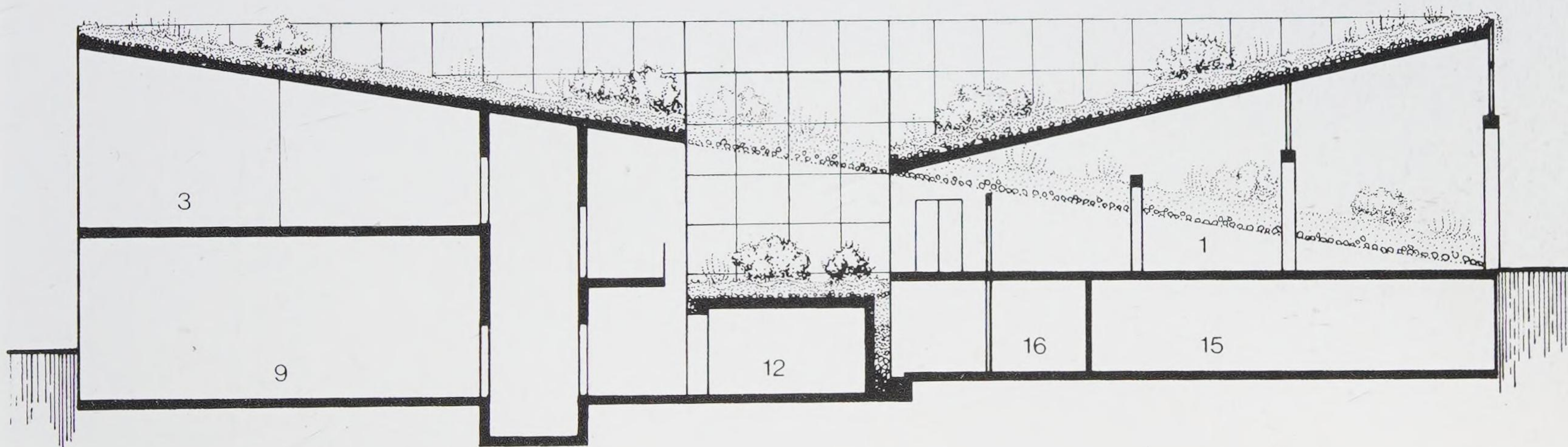
The Ansel Adams Center is meant to provide visitors with an exterior and interior architectural experience that operates on multiple levels. The building itself, in addition to its basic function as a study center for photography, serves as a celebratory fusion of nature, image, illusion, perspective, narrative, and communication.

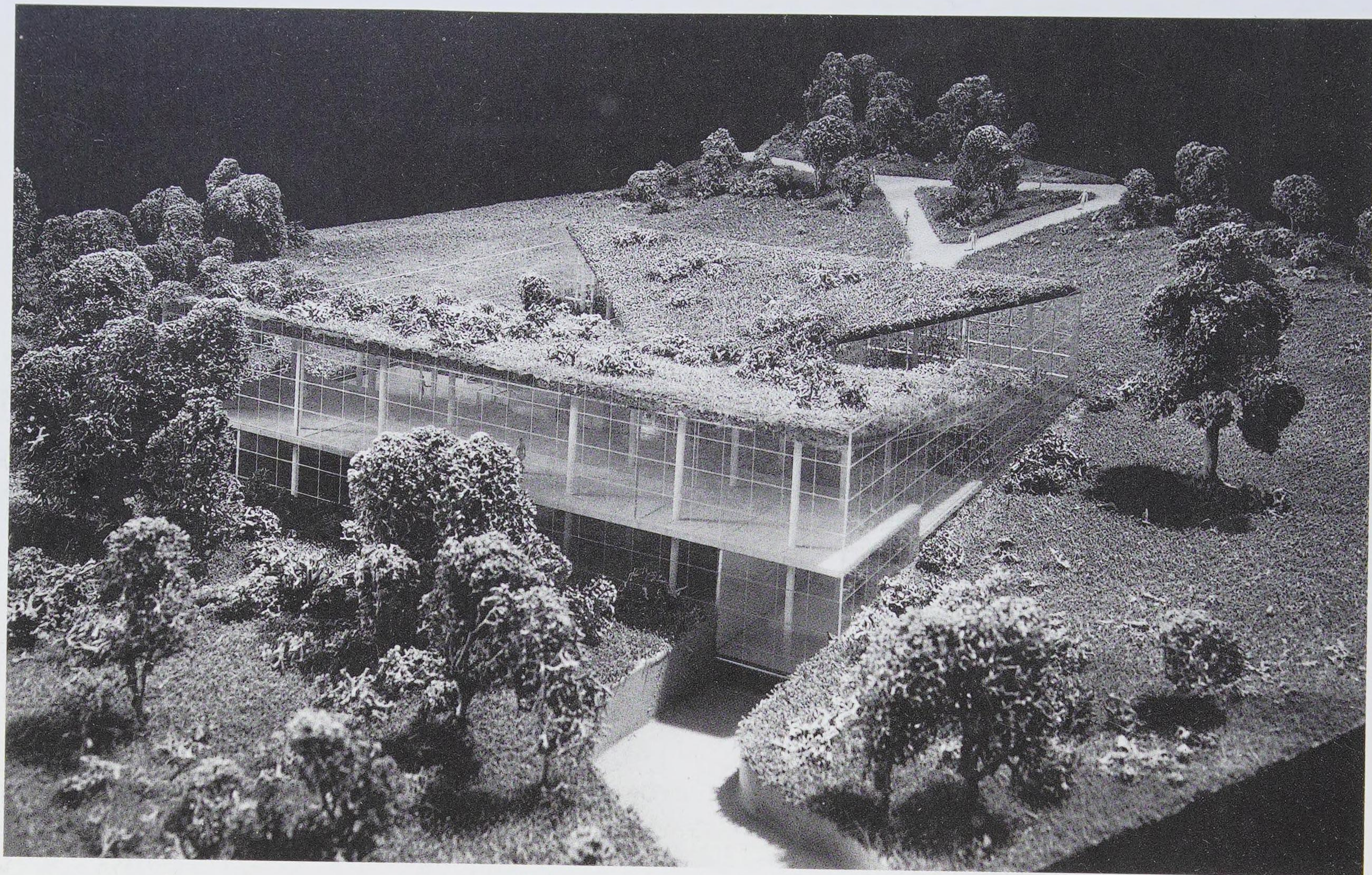


General view of model with surrounding landscape



Plans and section

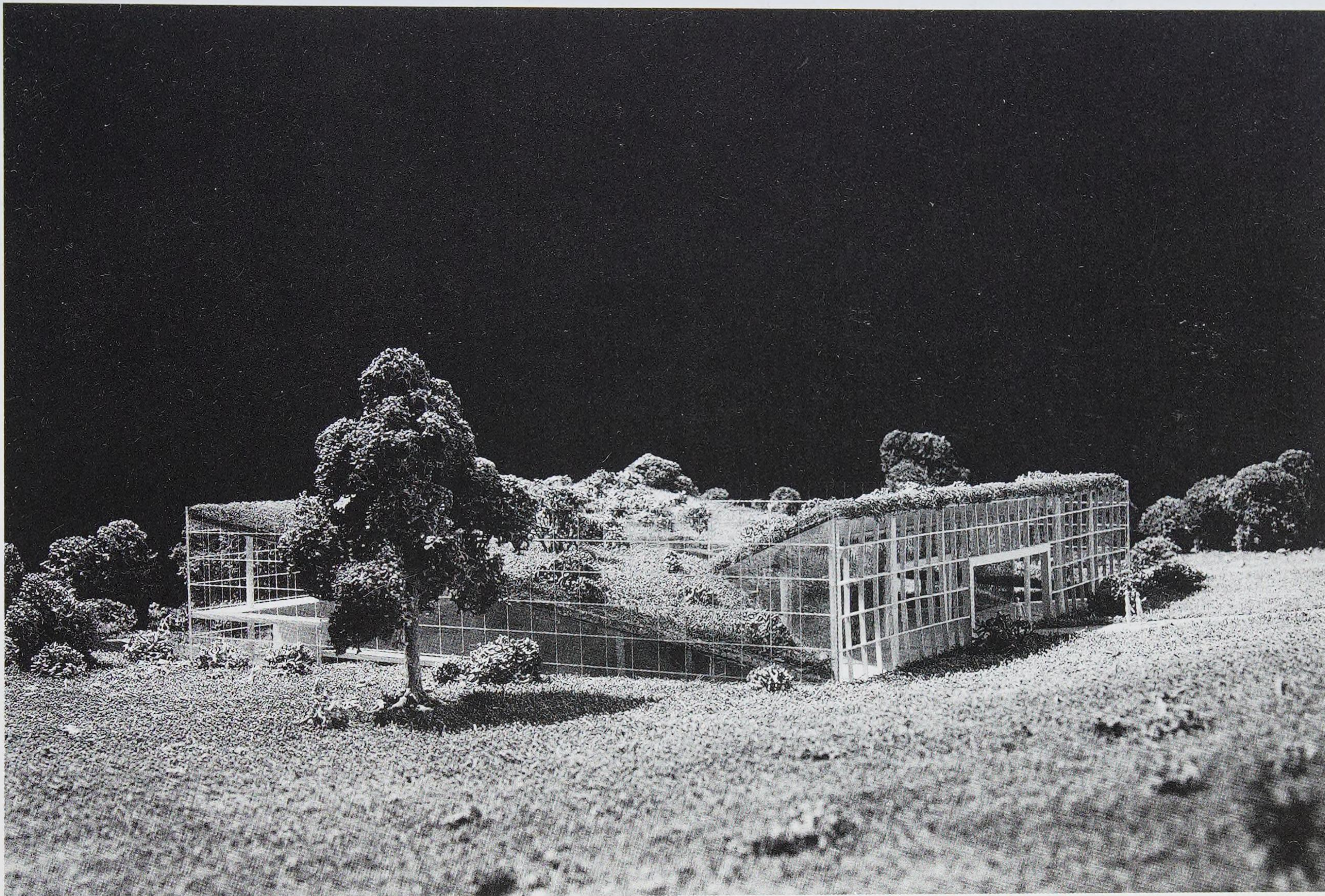




Model showing delivery entrance and offices



Model showing relationship of museum to landscape



Model showing facade and main entrance

MUSEUM OF THE BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN

Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, New York
1984

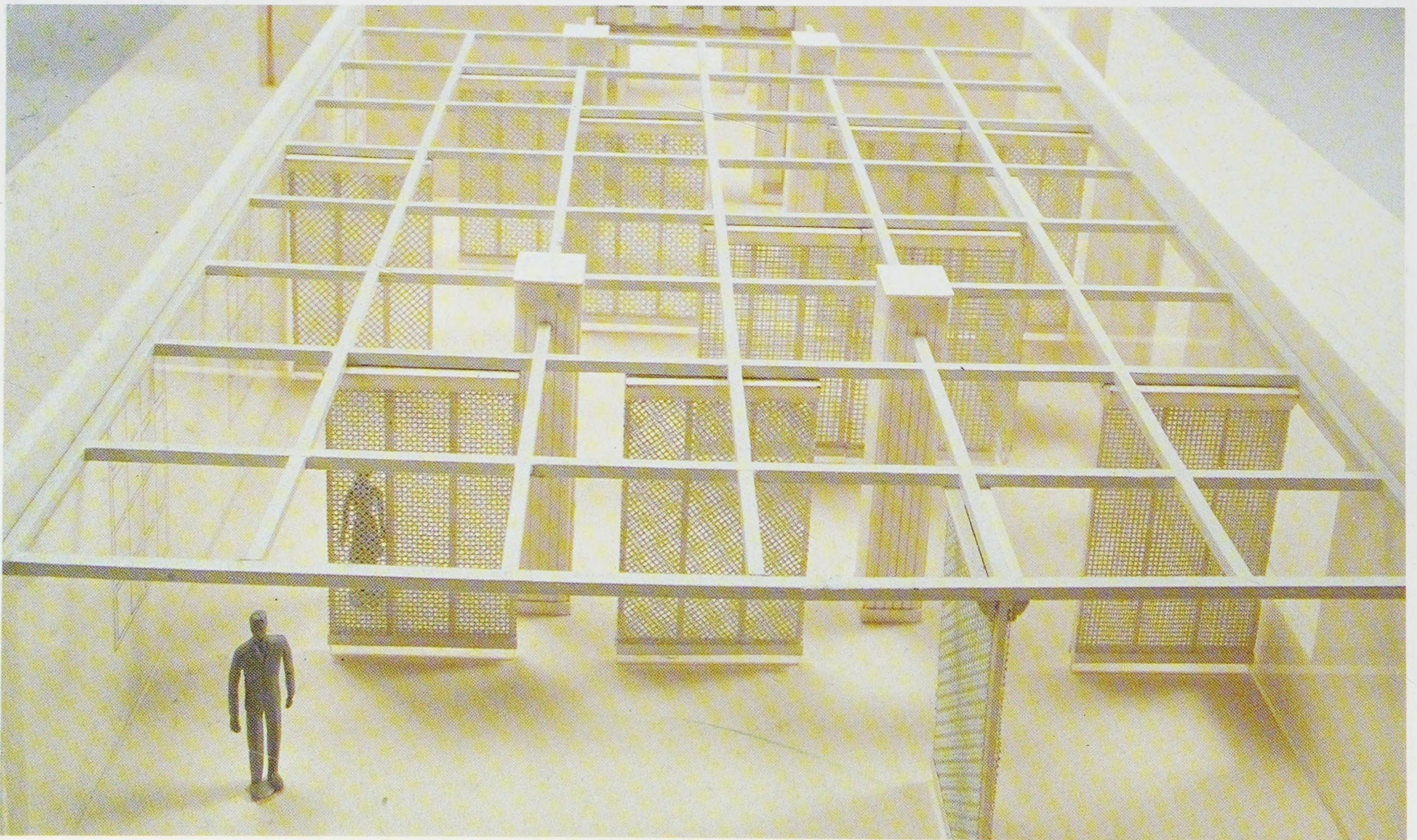
The requirements of the museum, as the only institution devoted to the visual and cultural history of Brooklyn, presented a challenge: the need for a totally flexible environment able to accommodate an extraordinary range and diversity of objects. These artifacts range from historical to contemporary, two-dimensional to three-dimensional, memorabilia to fine art, commonplace to rare, and are all variety of size, shape, and color. The inherent problems of designing an interior as a display context are complicated by the need to respect the scale of the objects, neither overwhelming the smaller objects nor understating the monumental quality of others.

The character of La Guardia Hall, once the centerpiece of the campus, became an important consideration. Completed in 1937 by Randolph Evans, it is a Georgian-style building with architectural details in the refined modern style.

The formal entrance, through an industrial archway, will be built of extruded metal materials and will reflect the vocabulary of the modern archways lining the outer hallways.

Floating exhibition walls (4 by 8½ feet in dimension) will be constructed of several different types of perforated metal extrusions, resulting in varied wall densities, from transparent to almost totally opaque. The walls suspended from an overhead grid/channel system, which permits omnidirectional movement, results in an unlimited number of combinations and spatial configurations. The perforated wall surfaces afford the opportunity to hang works anywhere with standard hardware hooks. Classical cornices and bases will establish a historical reference.

The possibility for continuously changing wall configurations and the varying densities that result from these overlapping layers in space convey an evolutionary quality. Background and foreground merge as one animated wall surface. No longer static, a new, more responsive relationship is established between the walls and the objects suspended on them. As one layer is perceived through the other, a sense of discovery takes over. The blurred motion of people and objects seen through the wall adds a dynamic dimension to what might otherwise be a static viewing experience.



Model of museum interior and movable wall system



General views of museum interior during exhibition





Detail of movable scrim wall



General view of gallery space



View of entrance arch

MELTING CANDLESTICK

1985

This project, a melting candlestick in silver, is intended to compensate for the fact that today's dripless candles fail to provide melting surfaces. This candelabrum restores the tra-

dition of dripping candles, considered by many to be romantic and evocative, while still taking advantage of scientific advances in candlemaking.



Melting Candlestick prototype

VITTEL "ICEBERG" BOTTLE 1986

The concept for the "Iceberg" Bottle uses the inherent nature of plastic itself as the source of the final idea, specifically avoiding the usual high-design approach with its decorative and stylistic intentions.

SITE was commissioned to redesign the water bottle for the Vittel Society of Mineral Water, Vittel, France, to celebrate its product with a totally new kind of container.

The solution was to take the standard Vittel water bottle and crush its surfaces. The resulting shape is evocative and indeterminate, with the additional advantage of unusual refractions and reflections that look remarkably similar to a piece of melting ice. This effect, in turn, makes the water itself appear more refreshing and inviting.



Vittel Bottle prototype

THEATER FOR THE NEW CITY

New York, New York

1986

The new location of the Theater for the New City will be on New York's Lower East Side, an area presently experiencing an explosion of activity in the arts. In developing a program for the theater, SITE took into account its location, the legacy of early 20th-century Yiddish theater, and the architectural restrictions imposed by adapting these facilities to the existing First Avenue Market Building. The plans call for three theaters of different size and purpose, their service spaces, a lobby, a café/restaurant, and a wide variety of rehearsal and prop-storage areas.

SITE's approach has always been to incorporate as many existing physical elements as possible in the renovation of an old structure. On the exterior of this building, this includes a facade composed of concrete piers and fascias; on the interior, a series of large warehouse spaces. In addition to the three theaters called for in the program, SITE created a fourth exterior fragment that serves as both a unique marquee and a reminder that people are actors on the stage of life until they are part of the illusory world of a play itself. The facade is treated as an interior balcony full

of vacant seats. To evoke the presence of a temporarily absent audience, many of the seats are covered with coats, hats, gloves, and programs. Attached to the flanking piers are louvered theatrical lights that illuminate the sidewalks and street to imply that a stage exists somewhere in the middle of First Avenue. To intensify this exterior/interior relationship, the fascias and piers are decorated with Beaux-Arts festoons.

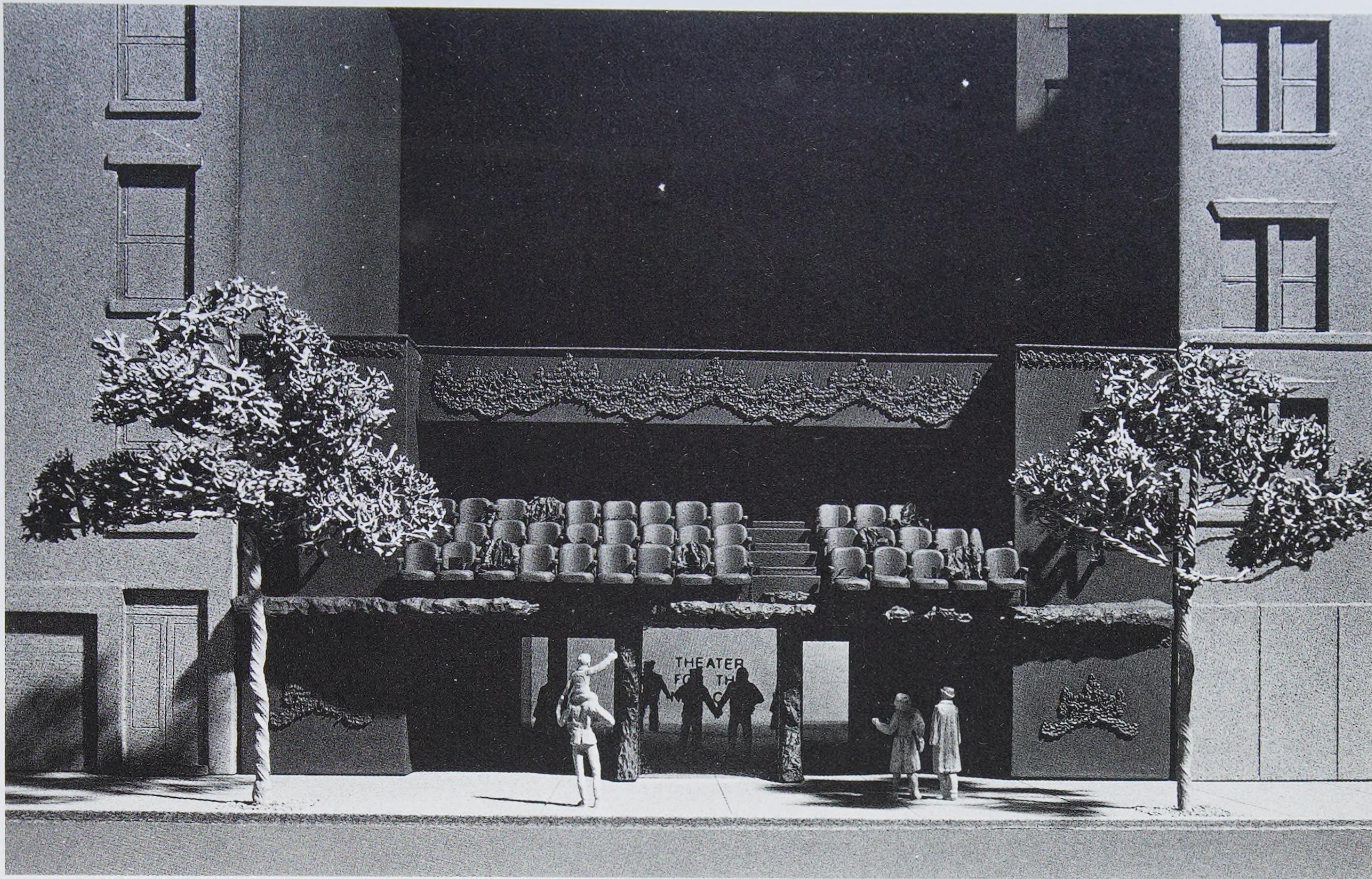
The Tenth Street side of the exterior, already covered with graffiti, will be designated a public mural, and local painters and graffiti artists will be asked to continue this visual saturation.

To extend the inside/outside theme of the facade, the balcony elements are carried to the interior ceiling by eliminating the floor plane and allowing the seats to be suspended overhead like a filigree canopy.

The concept for the Theater for the New City is to focus on the implications of "audience," both as a real presence and as an idea.



Existing market building on First Avenue planned for theater conversion



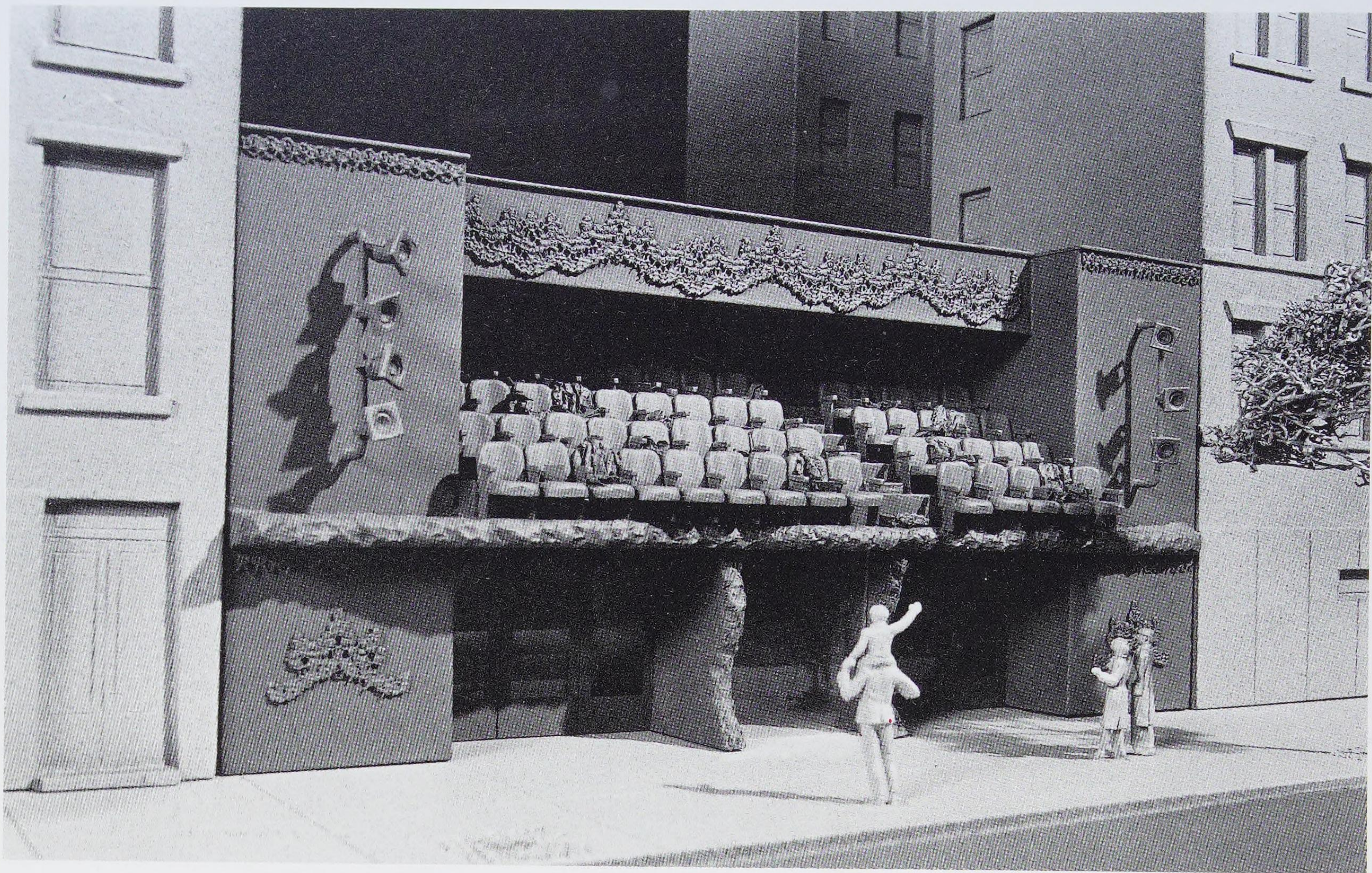
Model of facade showing balcony seating marquee



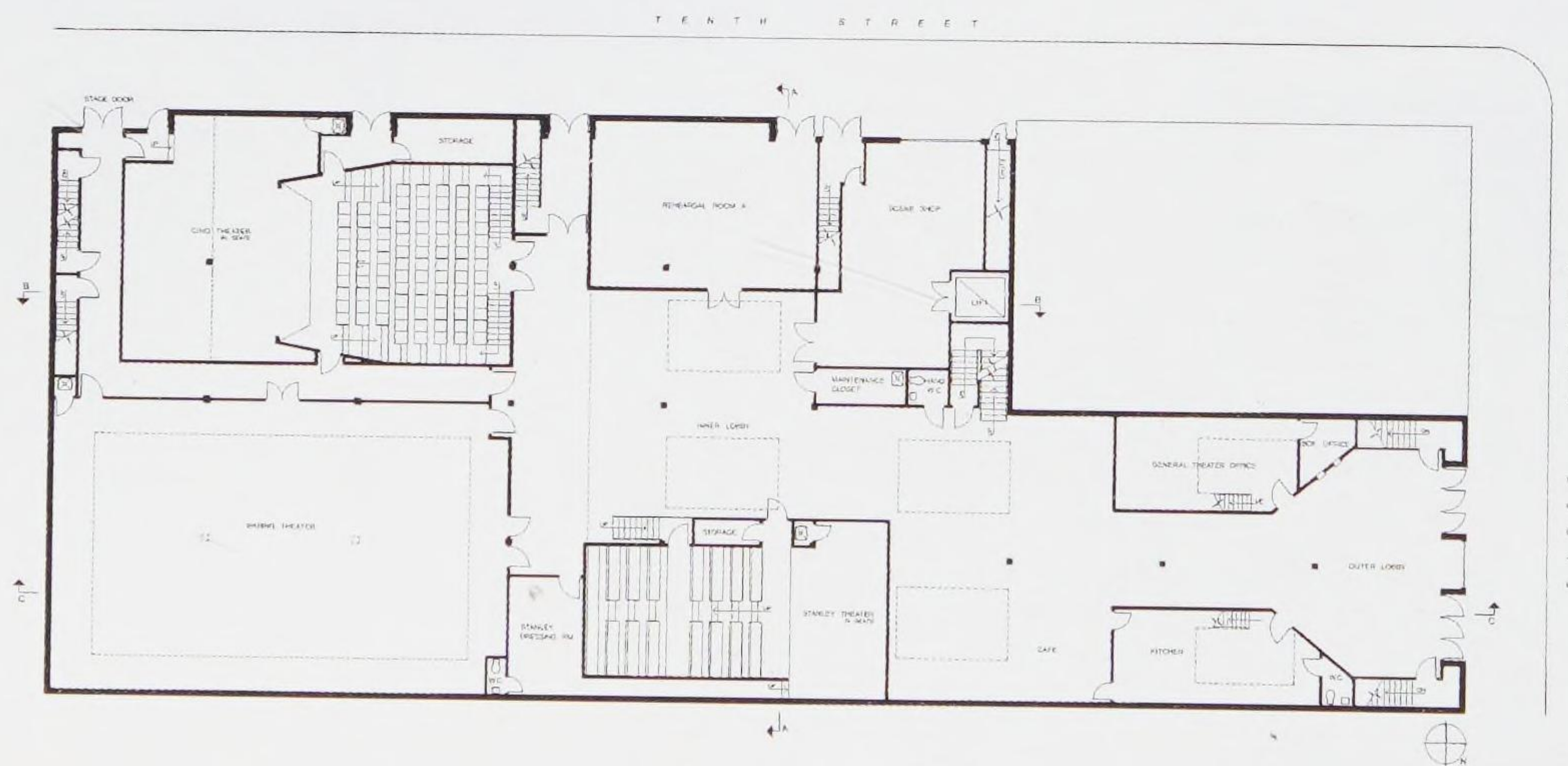
First Avenue elevation



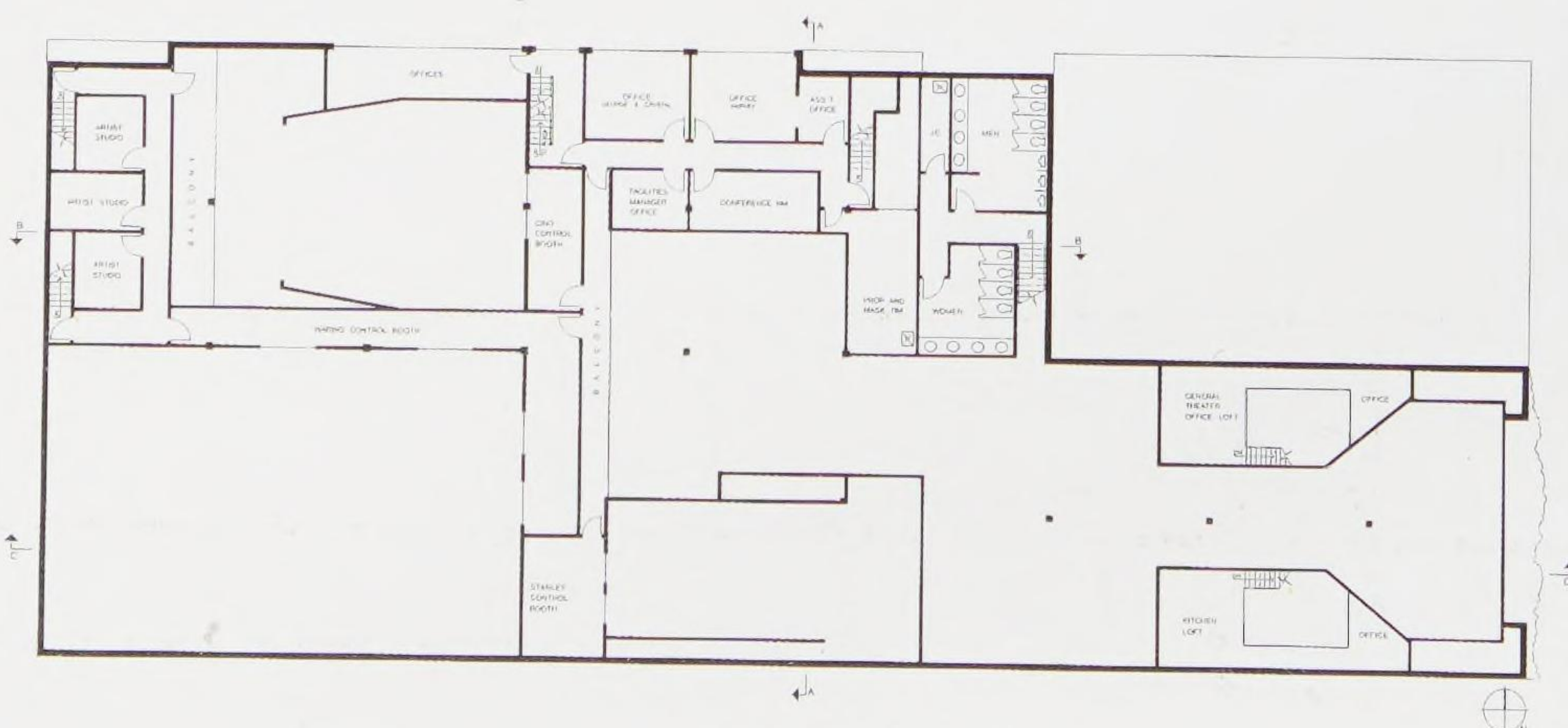
Tenth Street elevation



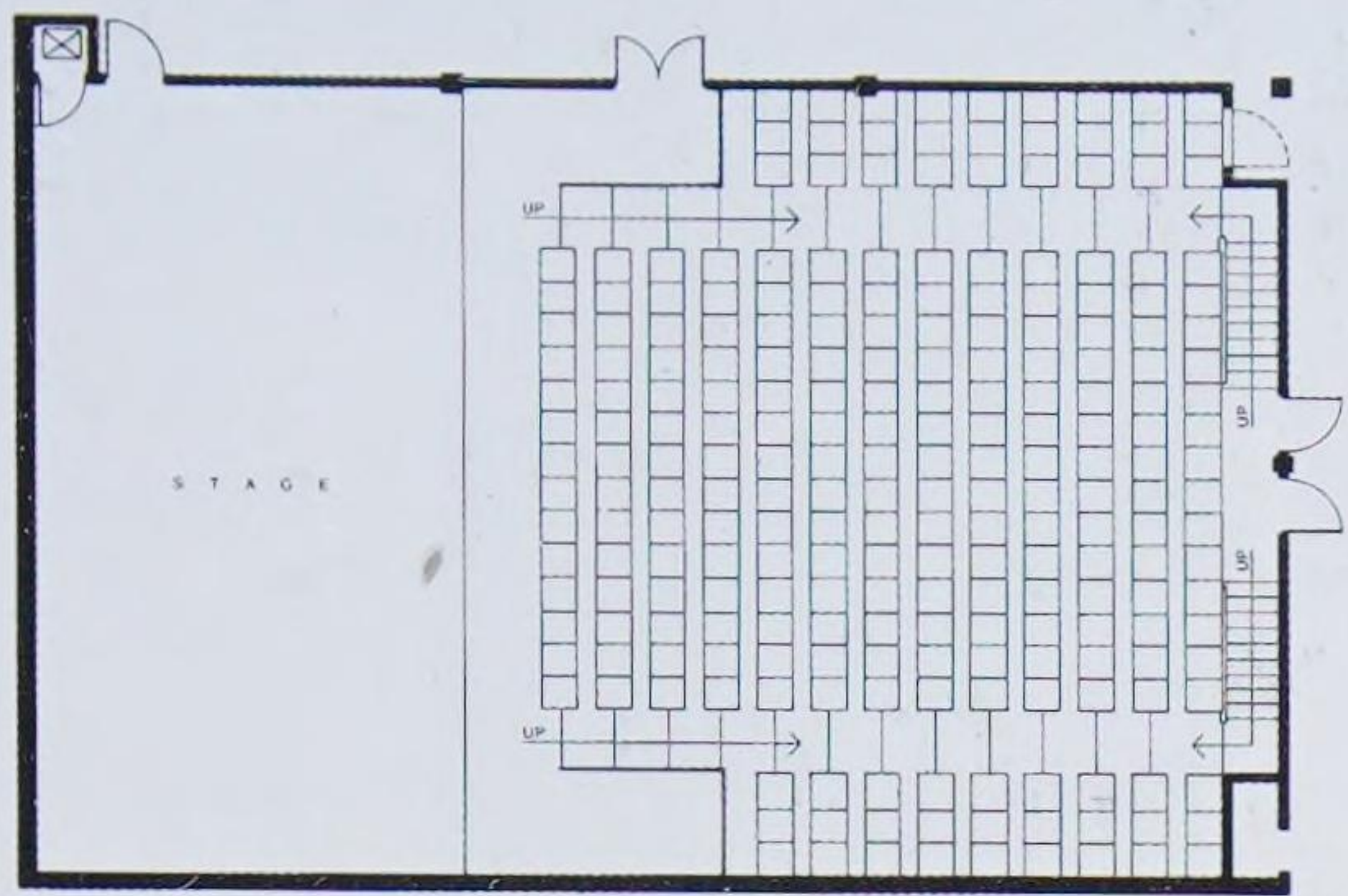
Detail of facade model



Ground floor plan

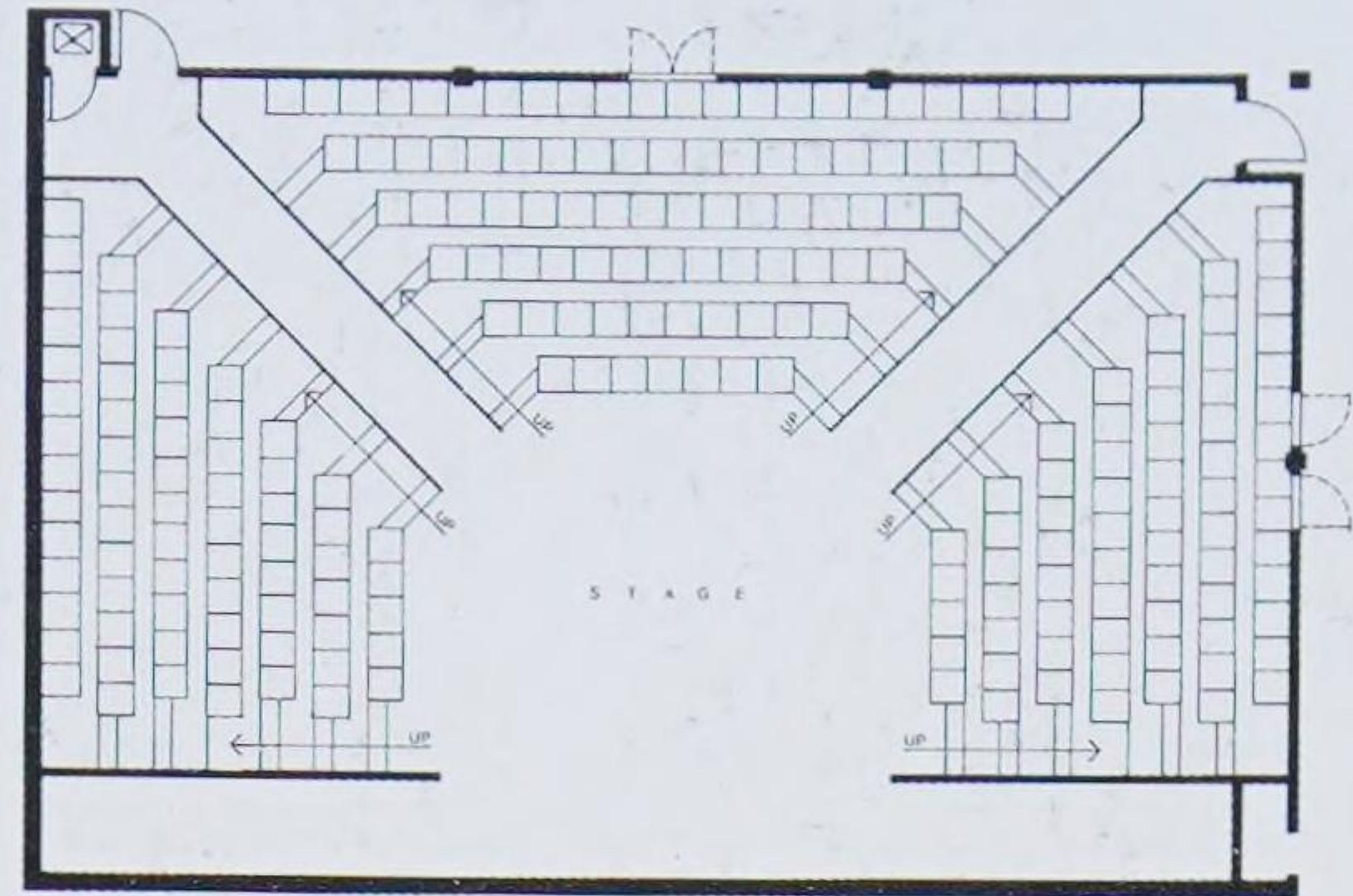


Mezzanine plan



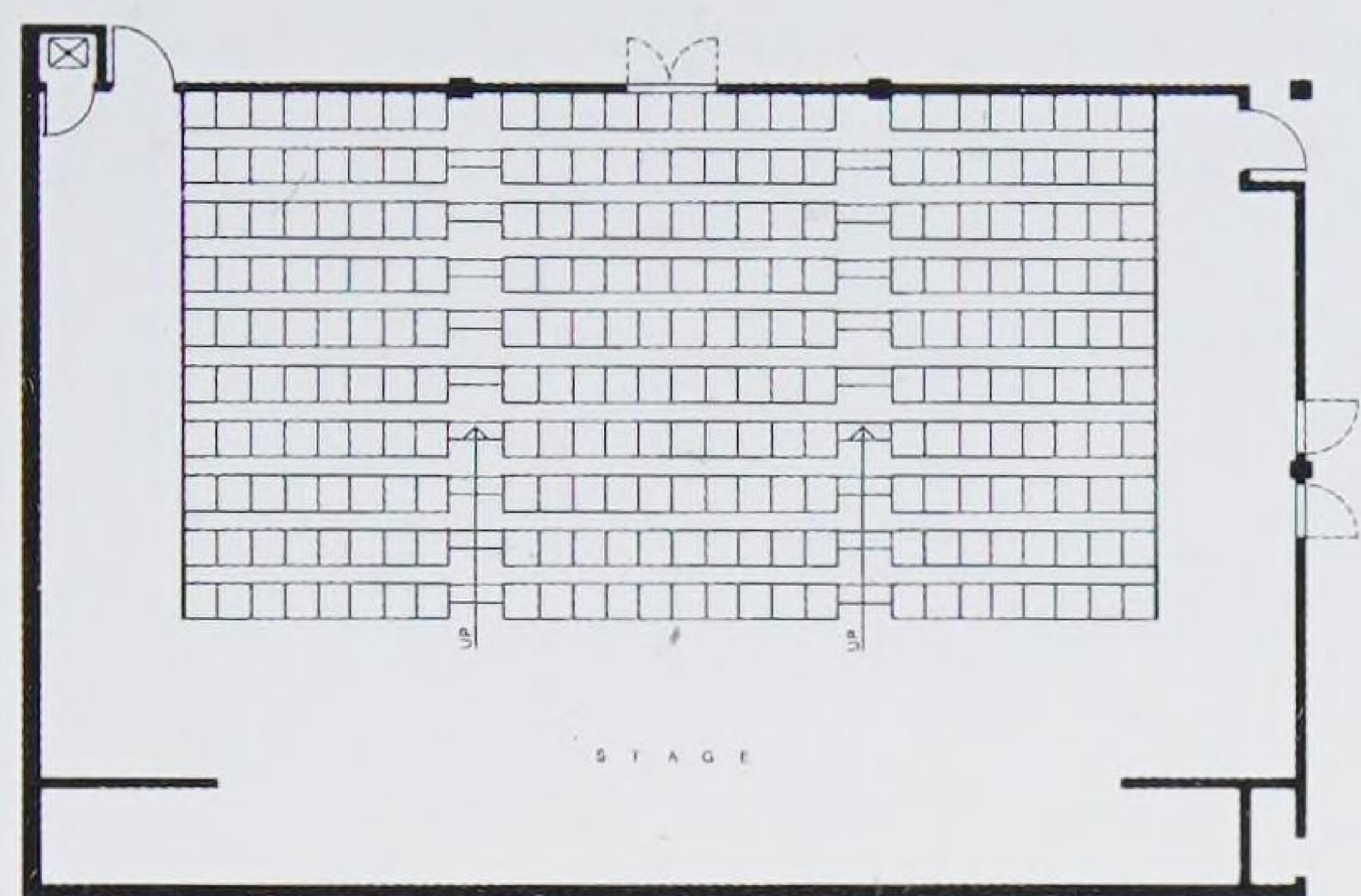
SCHEME A

236 SEATS



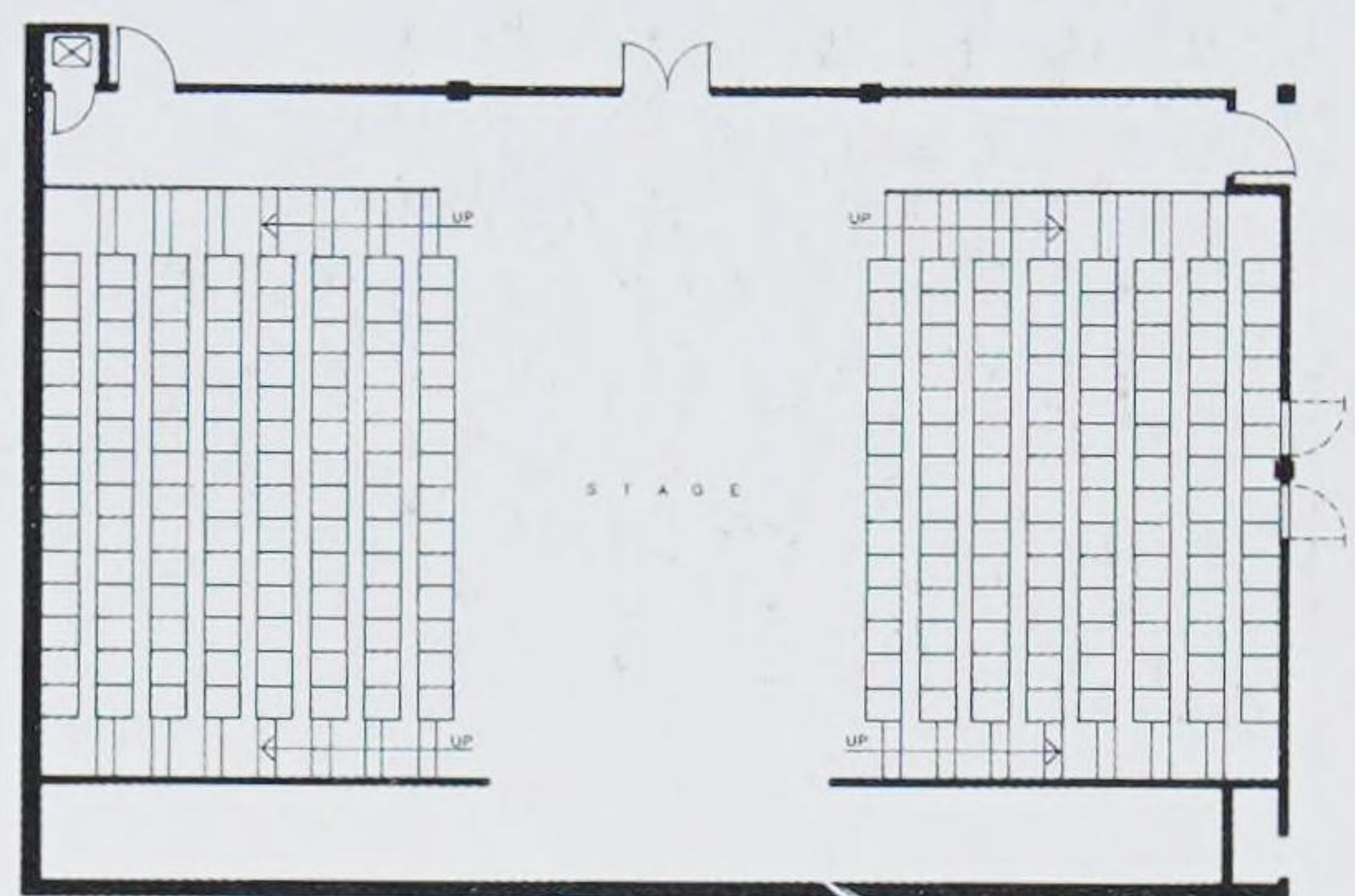
SCHEME B

223 SEATS



SCHEME C

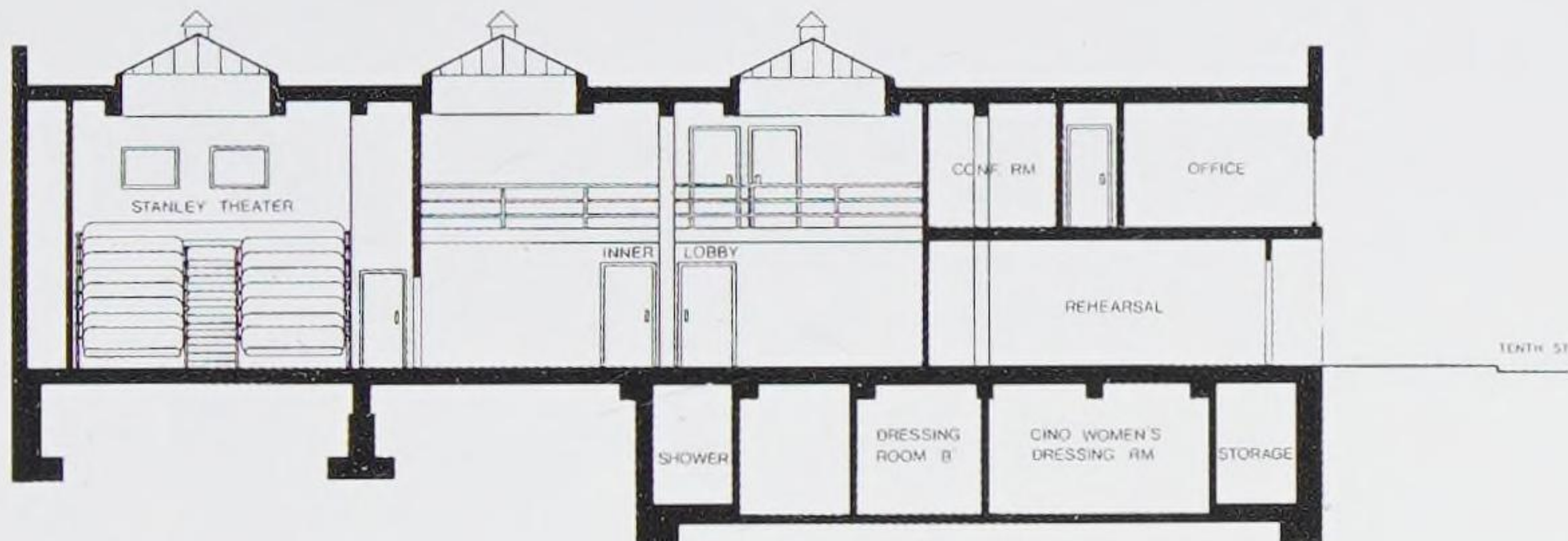
260 SEATS



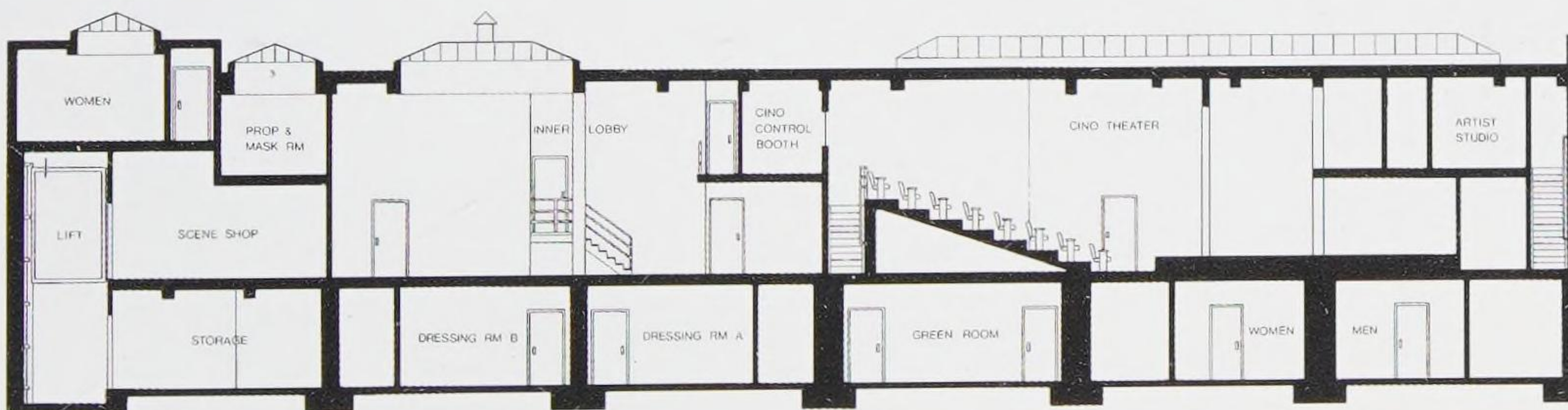
SCHEME D

224 SEATS

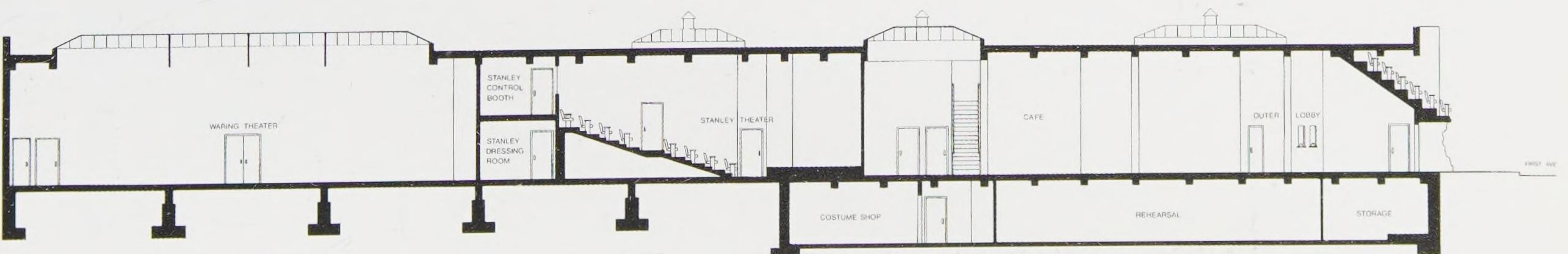
Plans



SECTION A-A



SECTION B-B



SECTION C-C

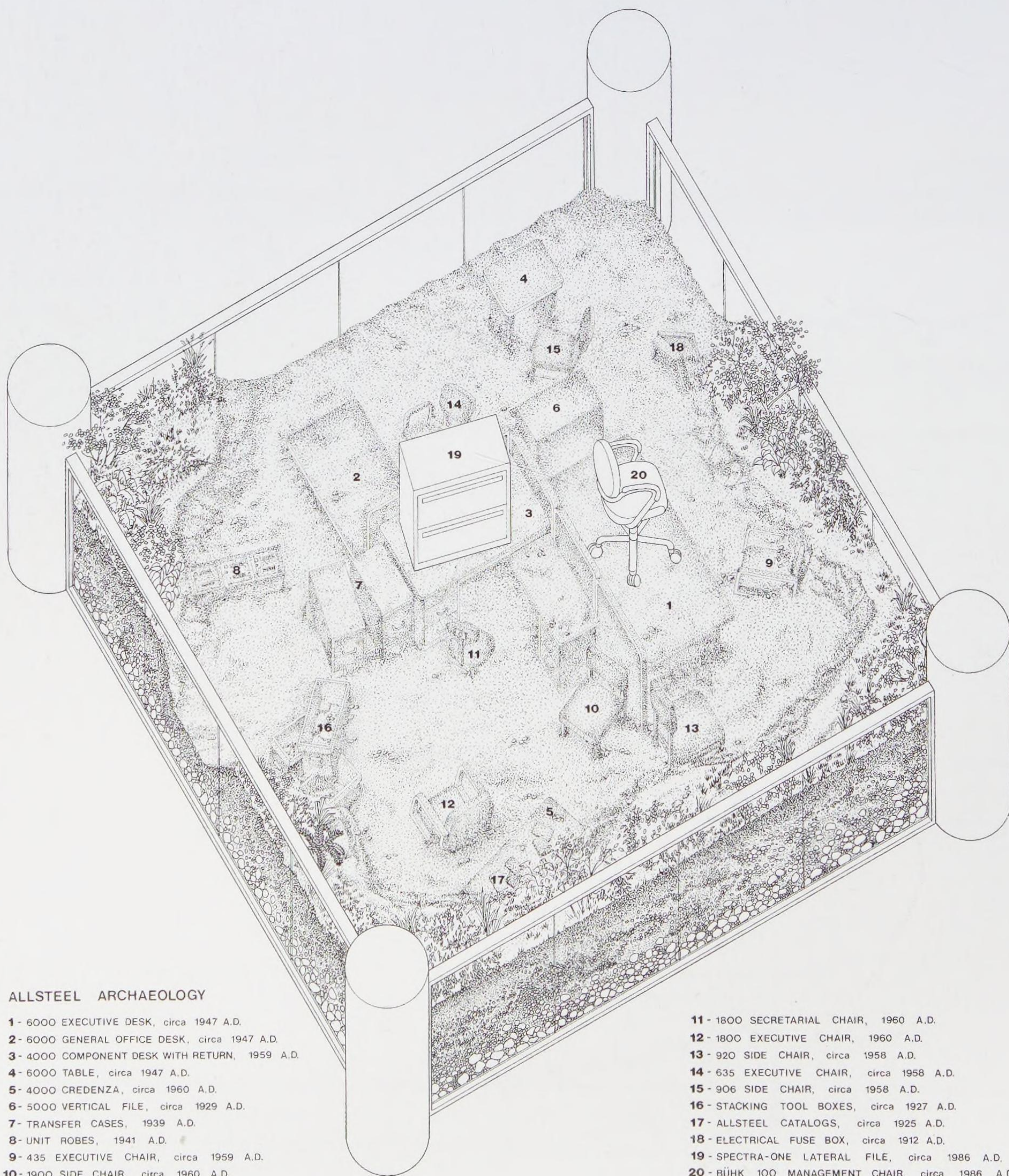
Sections

ALLSTEEL ARCHAEOLOGY

Long Island City, New York, and Allsteel Headquarters, Aurora, Illinois
1986

Allsteel Archaeology is intended to celebrate the company's 75th anniversary. The concept is based on the tableaux of archaeological excavations typically found in natural history museums. In this case, the archaeological elements are composed of various Allsteel office-furniture products repre-

senting the past 75 years. These objects are presented in several stages of excavation. In order to include the entire legacy of Allsteel and embrace the present and the future, office furniture of recent production has been placed on top of the earth-encrusted objects of the past.



ALLSTEEL ARCHAEOLOGY

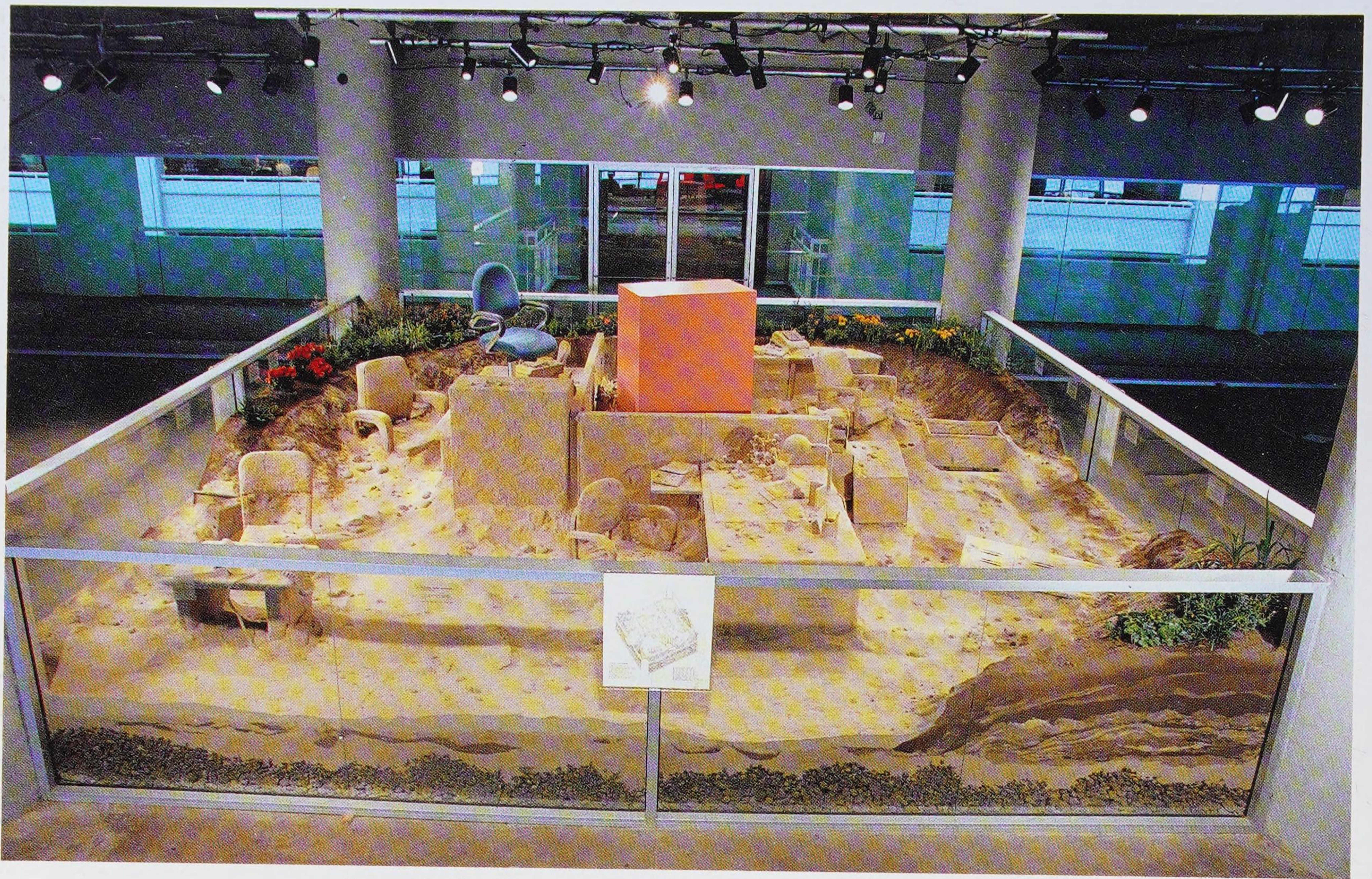
- 1 - 6000 EXECUTIVE DESK, circa 1947 A.D.
- 2 - 6000 GENERAL OFFICE DESK, circa 1947 A.D.
- 3 - 4000 COMPONENT DESK WITH RETURN, 1959 A.D.
- 4 - 6000 TABLE, circa 1947 A.D.
- 5 - 4000 CREDENZA, circa 1960 A.D.
- 6 - 5000 VERTICAL FILE, circa 1929 A.D.
- 7 - TRANSFER CASES, 1939 A.D.
- 8 - UNIT ROBES, 1941 A.D.
- 9 - 435 EXECUTIVE CHAIR, circa 1959 A.D.
- 10 - 1900 SIDE CHAIR, circa 1960 A.D.

- 11 - 1800 SECRETARIAL CHAIR, 1960 A.D.
- 12 - 1800 EXECUTIVE CHAIR, 1960 A.D.
- 13 - 920 SIDE CHAIR, circa 1958 A.D.
- 14 - 635 EXECUTIVE CHAIR, circa 1958 A.D.
- 15 - 906 SIDE CHAIR, circa 1958 A.D.
- 16 - STACKING TOOL BOXES, circa 1927 A.D.
- 17 - ALLSTEEL CATALOGS, circa 1925 A.D.
- 18 - ELECTRICAL FUSE BOX, circa 1912 A.D.
- 19 - SPECTRA-ONE LATERAL FILE, circa 1986 A.D.
- 20 - BÜHK 100 MANAGEMENT CHAIR, circa 1986 A.D.

Axonometric drawing showing location of Allsteel objects



Detail of archaeological elements

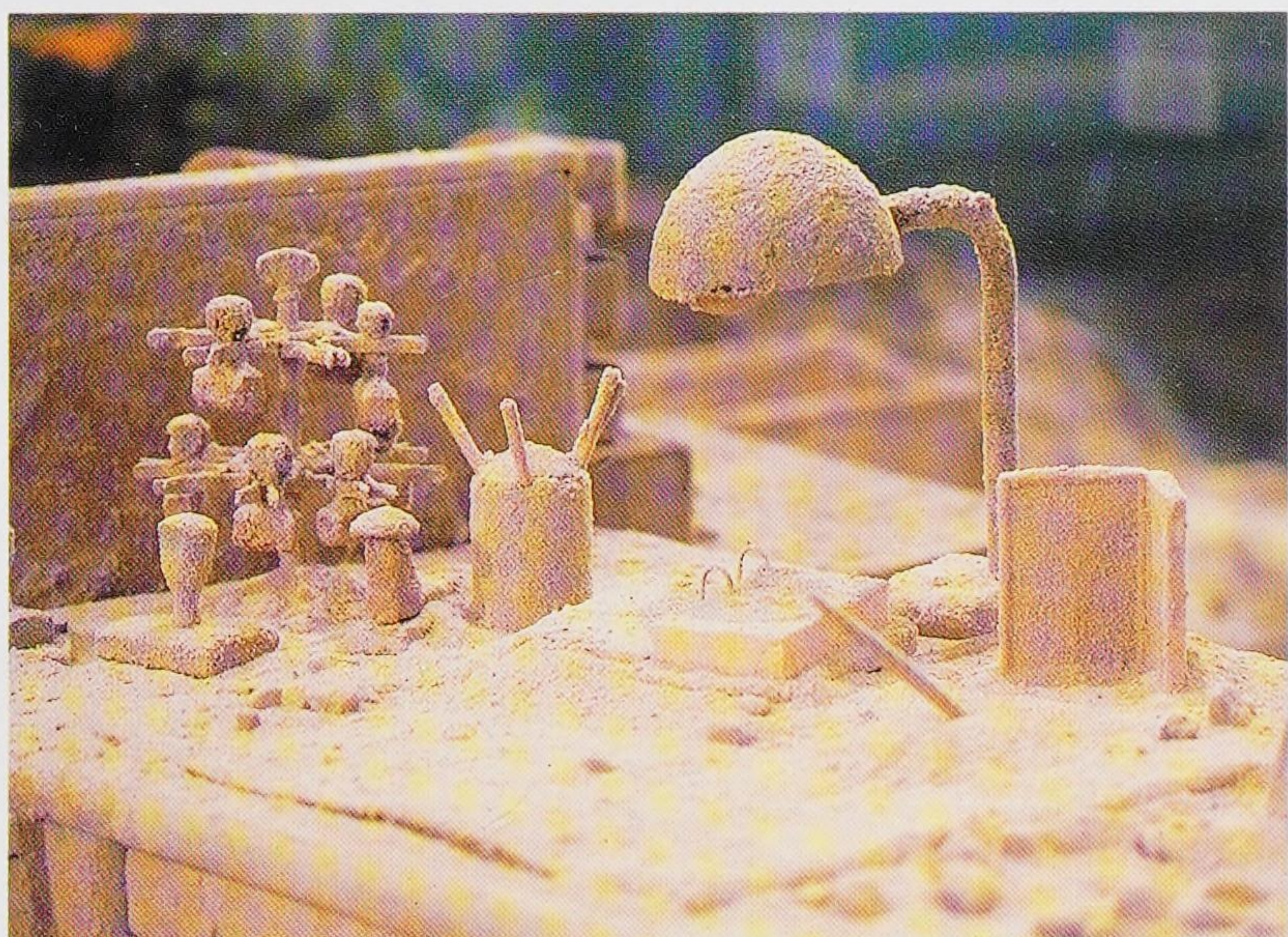


Views of Allsteel furniture embedded in archaeological environment





Details of archaeological elements



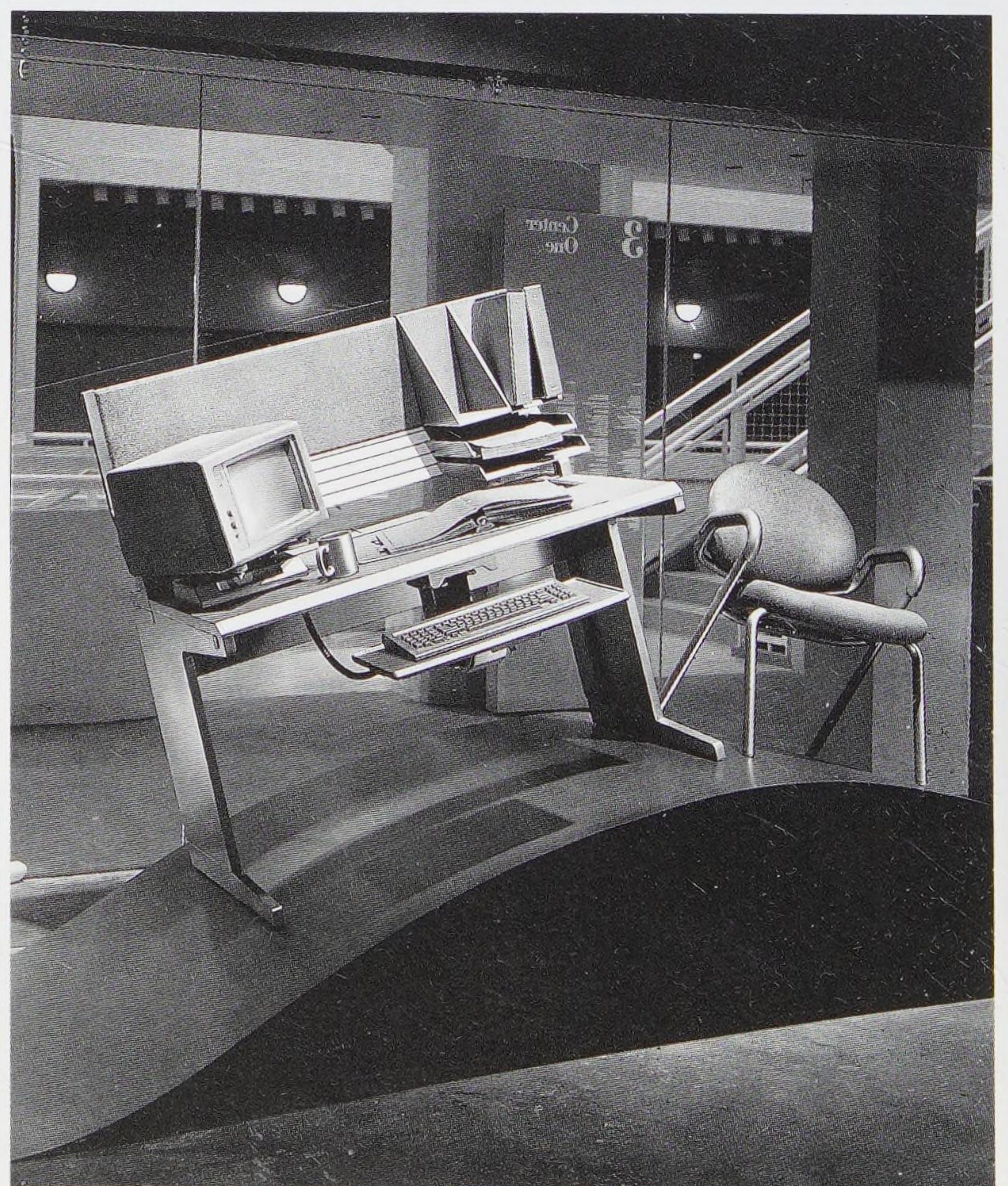
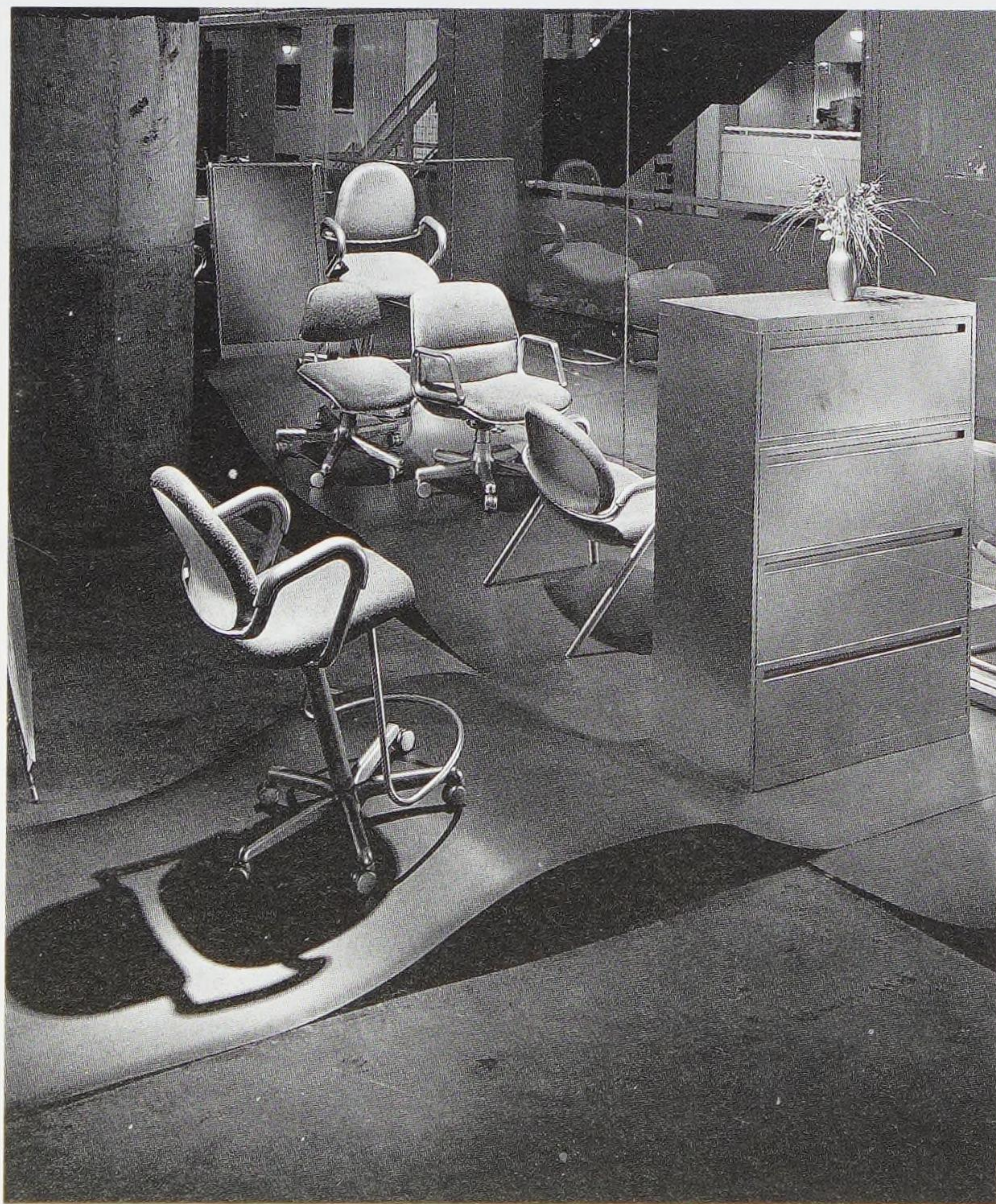
ALLSTEEL ROUTE TO THE FUTURE

Long Island City, New York
1987

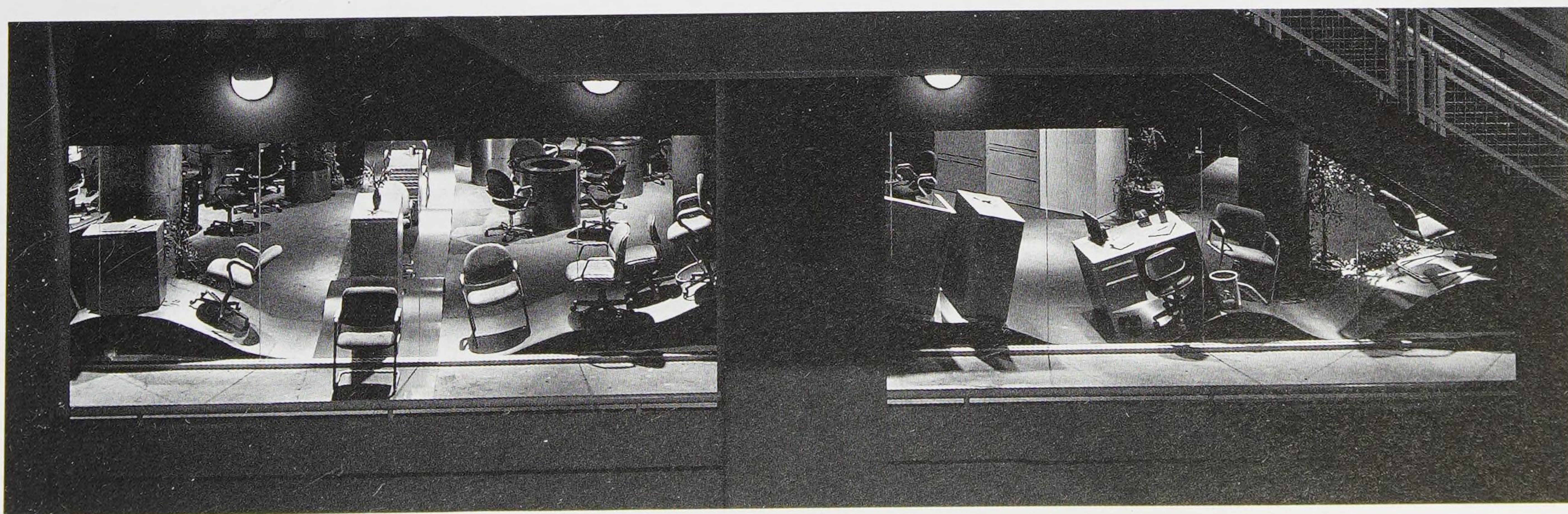
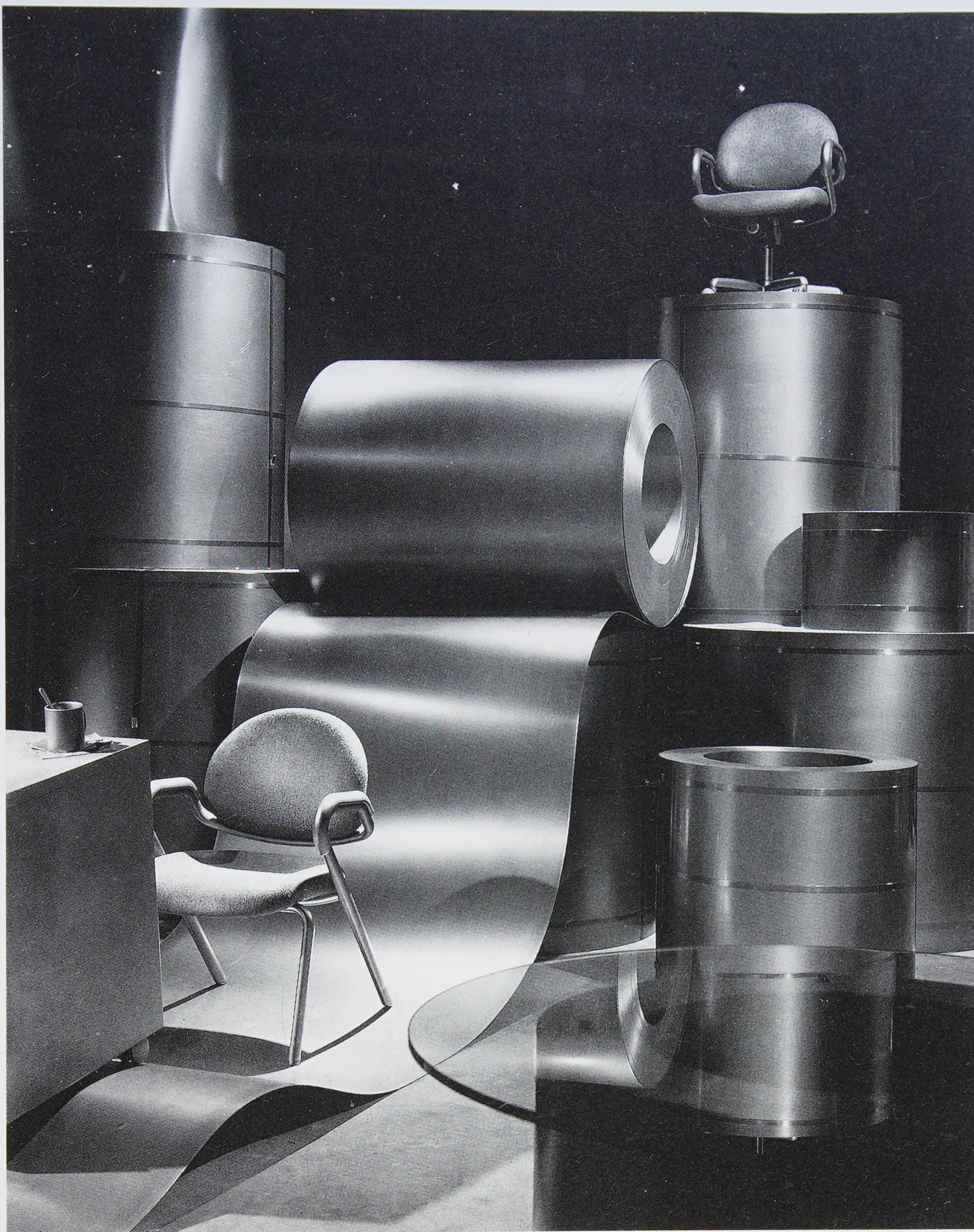
This project is the second temporary exhibition environment built for Allsteel Inc. in celebration of Designers' Saturday at the IDC/NY. Like the first concept (which dealt with Allsteel's product history as an archaeological event), this installation celebrates the legacy of the corporation as a manufacturer of well-designed and well-crafted office furniture. It also capitalizes on the psychological associations of strength and integrity that people attribute to any object constructed in steel.

Virtually all of the steel components of the company's products are made from rolls of sheet metal. In order to connect the furniture with its source, the showroom space is defined by a series of these rolls in randomly stacked

configurations. One unit is unrolled to create the Allsteel signage, while others define an undulating pathway directly behind the front window. Mounted on this artery is a selection of Allsteel products, each monochromed in the silver-gray color of the sheet metal. Even the peripheral elements of the typical office environment—books, flowers, pens, pencils, computer stations—are monochromed in steel surfacing. This is intended to bring audience focus on the notion of steel as the universal equivalent of quality. Also, because all of the surfaces appear to be fabricated in steel, the textures of cloth, wood, and plastic take on a dramatic and surreal aspect.



Details of Allsteel products in steel context



LAURIE MALLET HOUSE

New York, New York
1985

The Mallet residence is designed for a professional woman and her family in New York's Greenwich Village. The project called for the renovation and expansion of a three-story 1820s Greek Revival house in a historic landmark community. The dwelling was originally developed as early speculative housing. Because of neglect, its original construction methods, and general deterioration, the structure required major architectural work. Also, in order to expand the interior space, an innovative room was designed under the back garden and the basement was converted to several bedrooms.

The concept for the interior of this house is based on a layering of narrative ideas drawn from the structure's history, its context, and the personal biography of its owner.

This information was converted into a series of architectural and furniture artifacts that partially emerge from the walls, like ghosted memories that have been invaded by the later additions of several generations of inhabitants. This choice of artifacts is determined by the scale and purpose of each room and the existing architecture. Most of the objects are consistent with the lifestyle of the 1820s, although a few (like the entrance hall's equestrian elements) are based on the owner's personal history.

This work of narrative architecture is completed by the addition of a final layer of residential artifacts provided by the Mallet family. The result is that every inch of the interior and the garden is invested with historical and psychological cross-referencing.



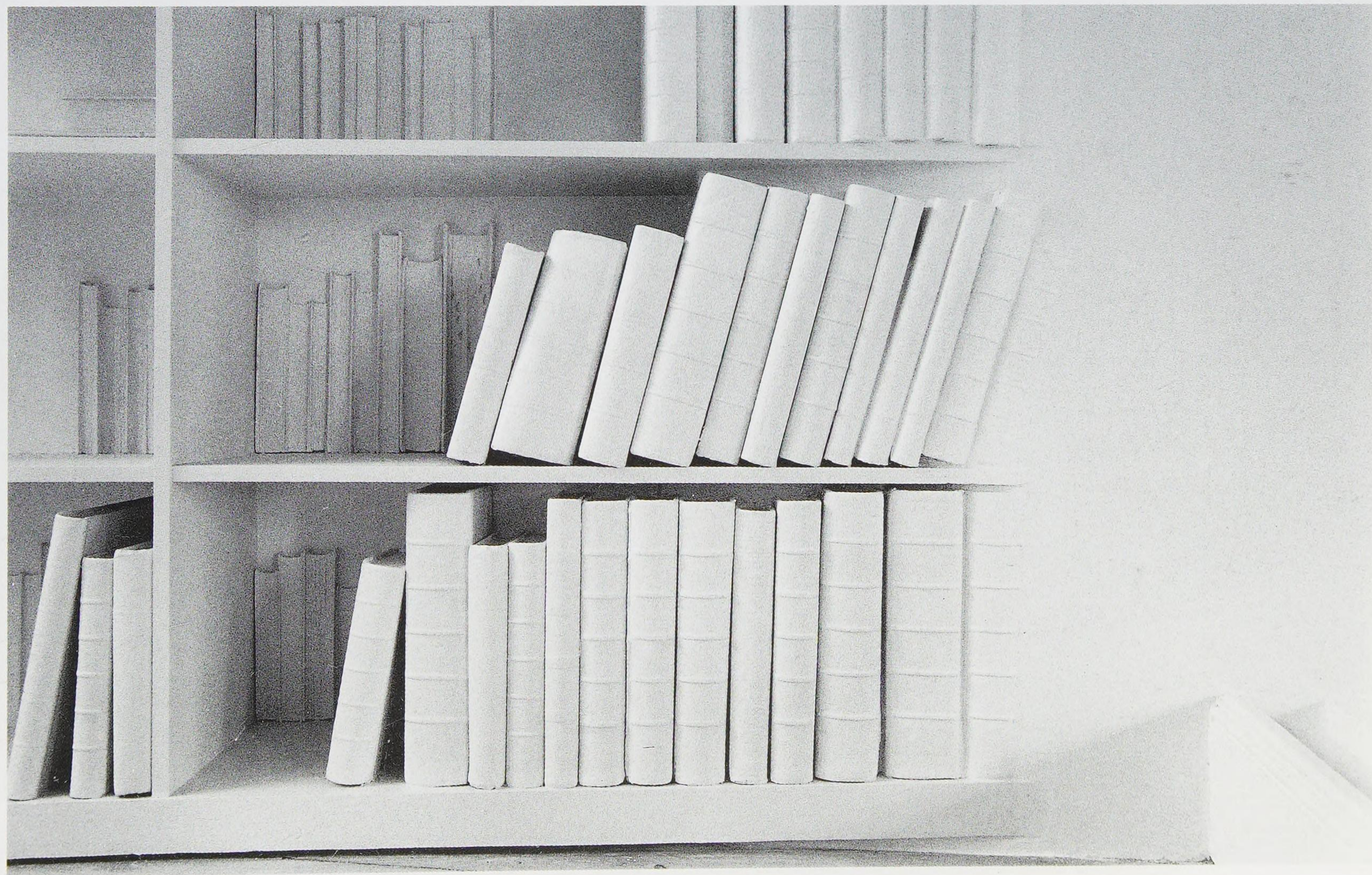
Facade of the 1820s house before conversion



Garden view



Views of interior with ghost bookshelves

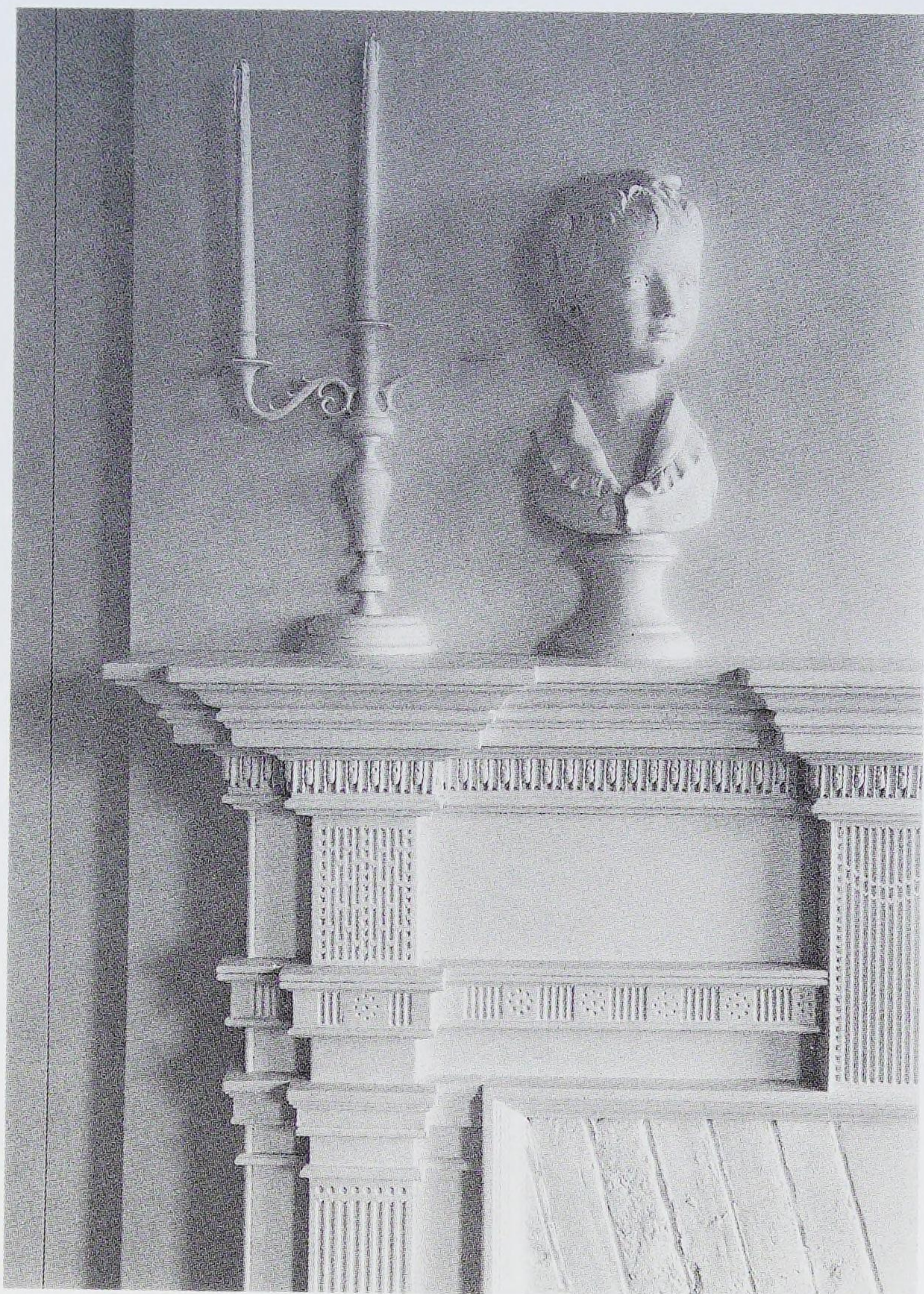




*Views of hallways and staircases showing
ghosted doors and windows*



Entrance with ghosted equestrian objects



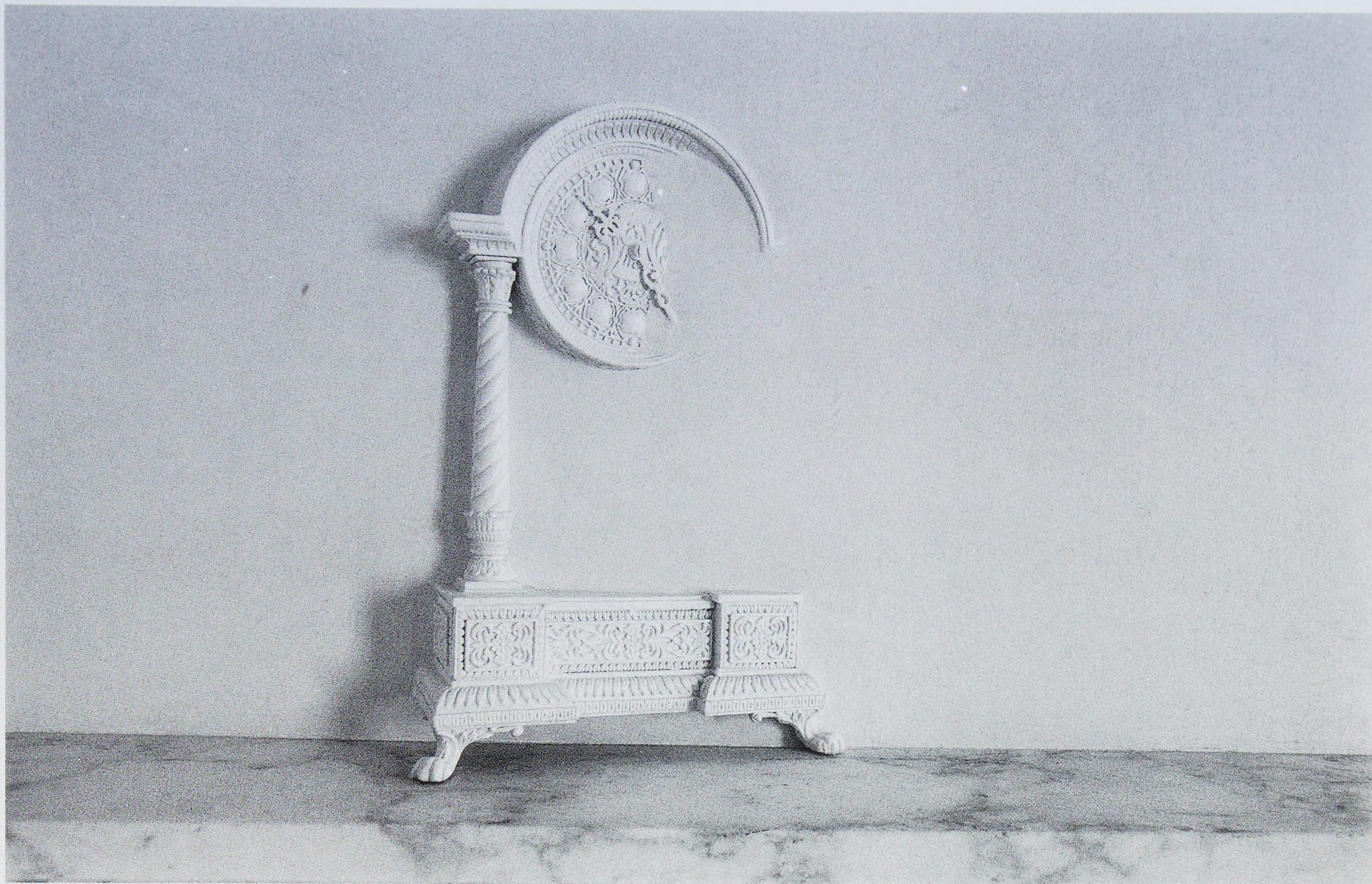
Dining-room mantelpiece



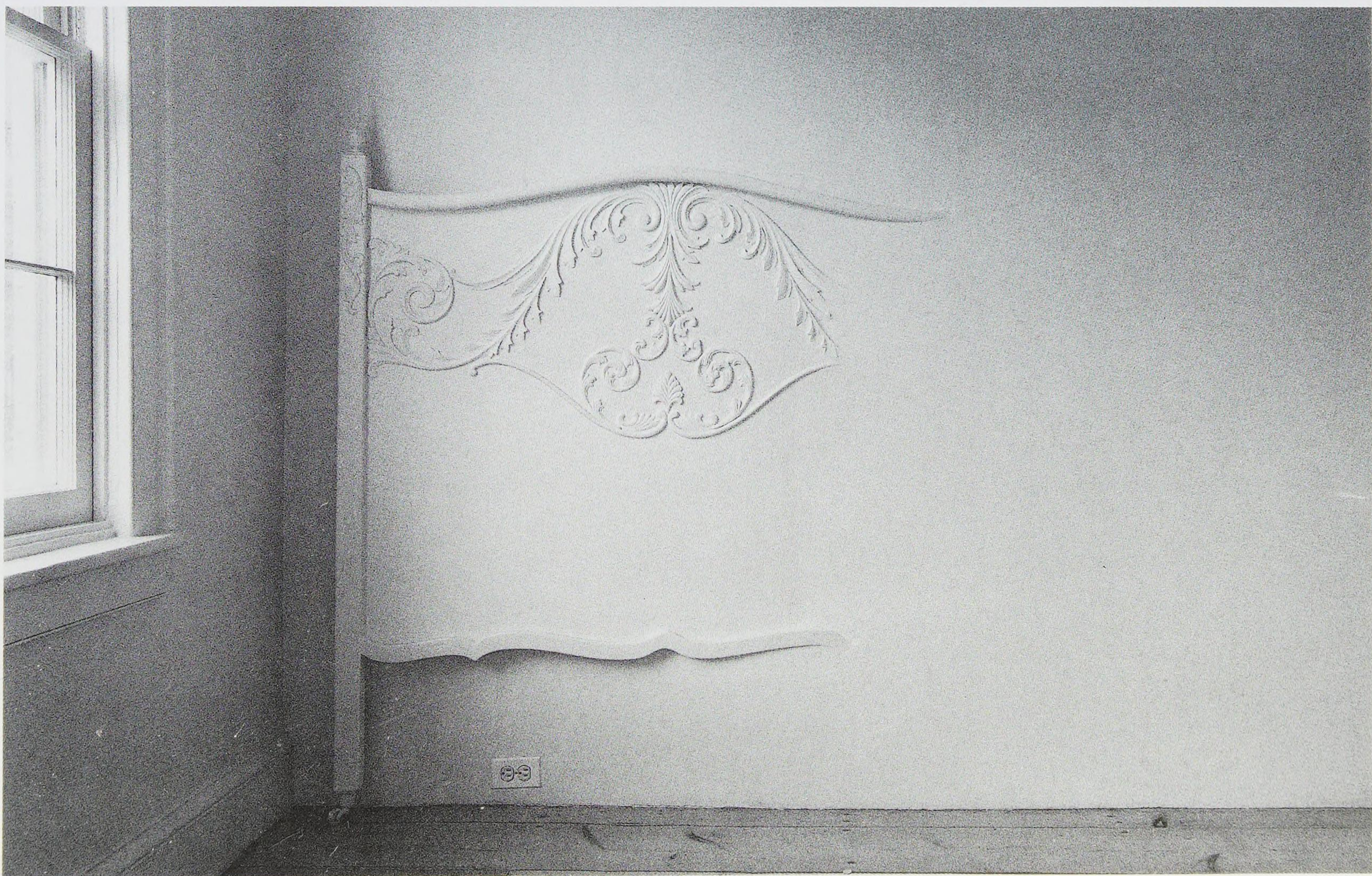
Living-room fireplace



Front hallway with equestrian objects



Ghosted clock on mantelpiece



Ghosted bedroom

HIGHWAY '86 PROCESSIONAL

World Exposition, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
1986

The Highway '86 Processional is a winning competition entry for the transportation/communication pavilion and processional at the 1986 Vancouver World Exposition. The theme of this structure is the technology of "here and now—air, land, and sea." The design utilizes the entire length of a public space for the Expo. It includes an area that runs under two major viaducts and along a processional flanked by various national and corporate exhibits and abuts the harbor.

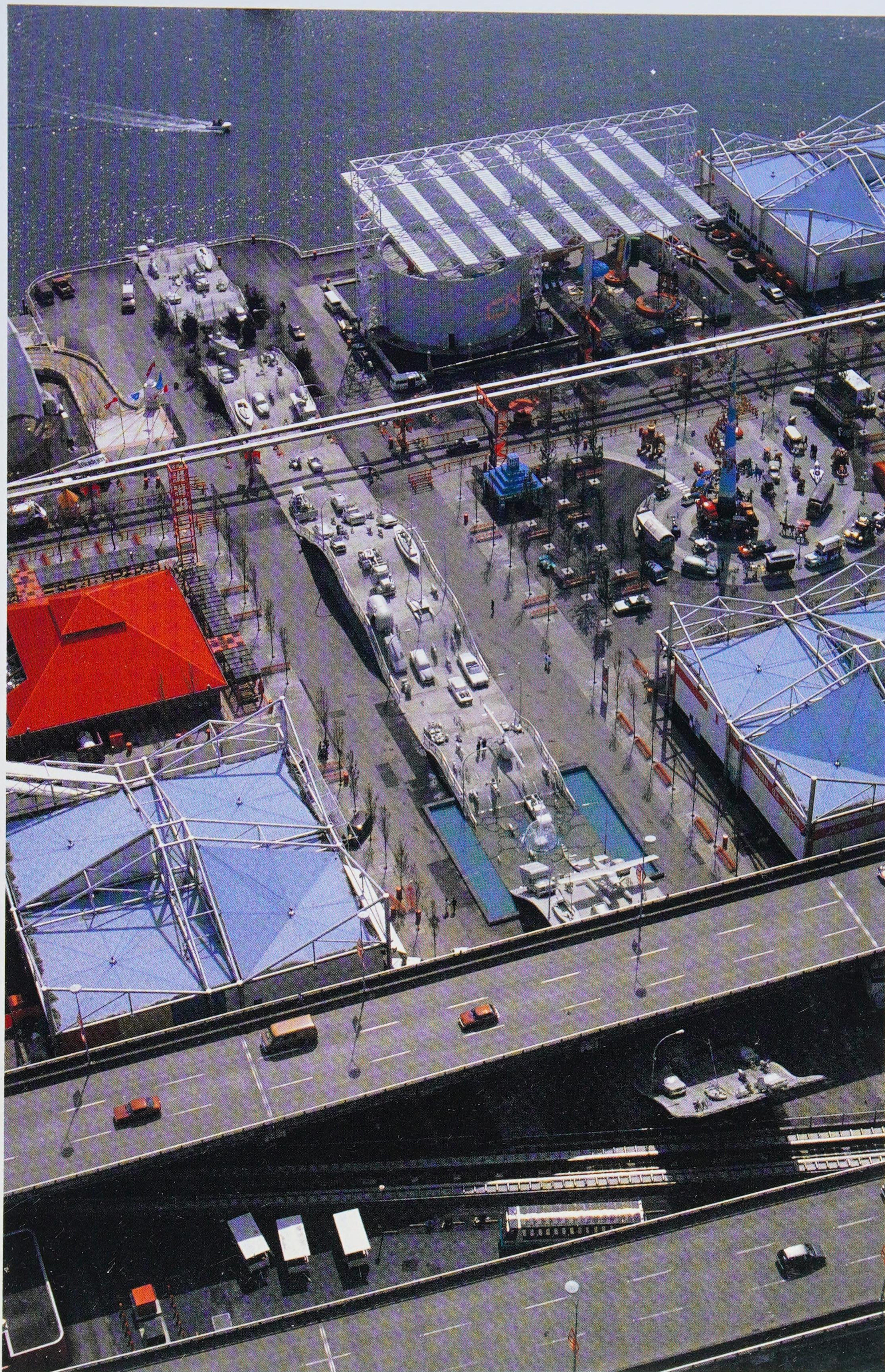
Highway '86 is an undulating four-lane steel and concrete boulevard that rises from the sea and occupies the entire length of the central space. As it approaches the viaducts, the surface paving of the plaza is elevated and the roadway soars upward between two existing structures, end-

ing in an abruptly broken-off section of highway. The surface of this artery is covered with a density of every type of present-day air, land, and sea transportation: cars, boats, motorcycles, bicycles, space capsules, lunar rovers, airplanes, rockets. Each object is painted the same shade of light gray, blending with the color of the concrete roadway. The structure functions as a massive work of environmental sculpture with surreal or dreamlike implications.

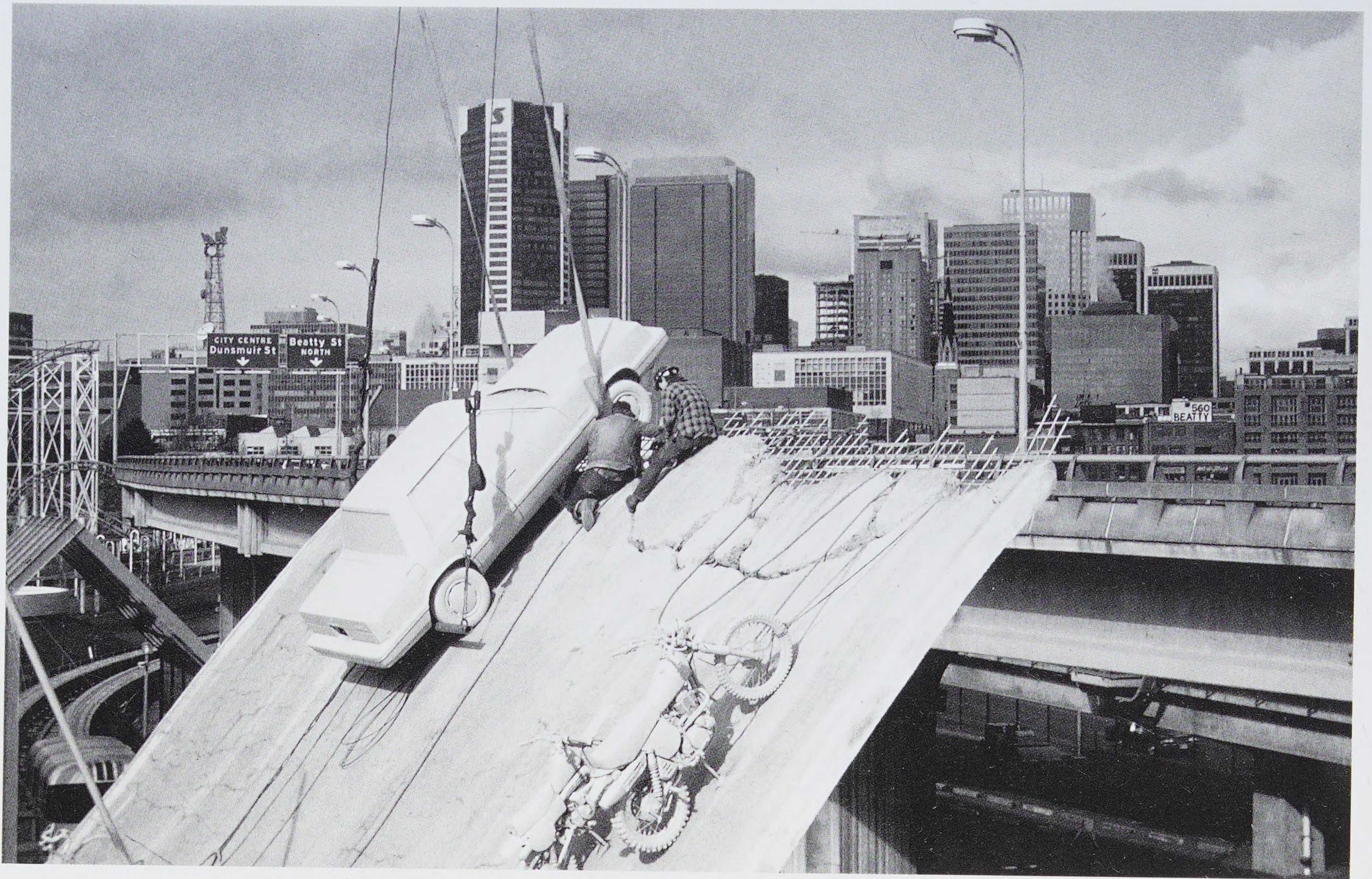
Highway '86 is conceived as a commentary on the public's ambivalent relationship to technology in the 1980s, and can be perceived as leading to either utopia or apocalypse. Also, since the roadway emerges from the sea like a giant serpent or a primordial creature, it can be interpreted as a humorous view of Darwin's theory of evolution.



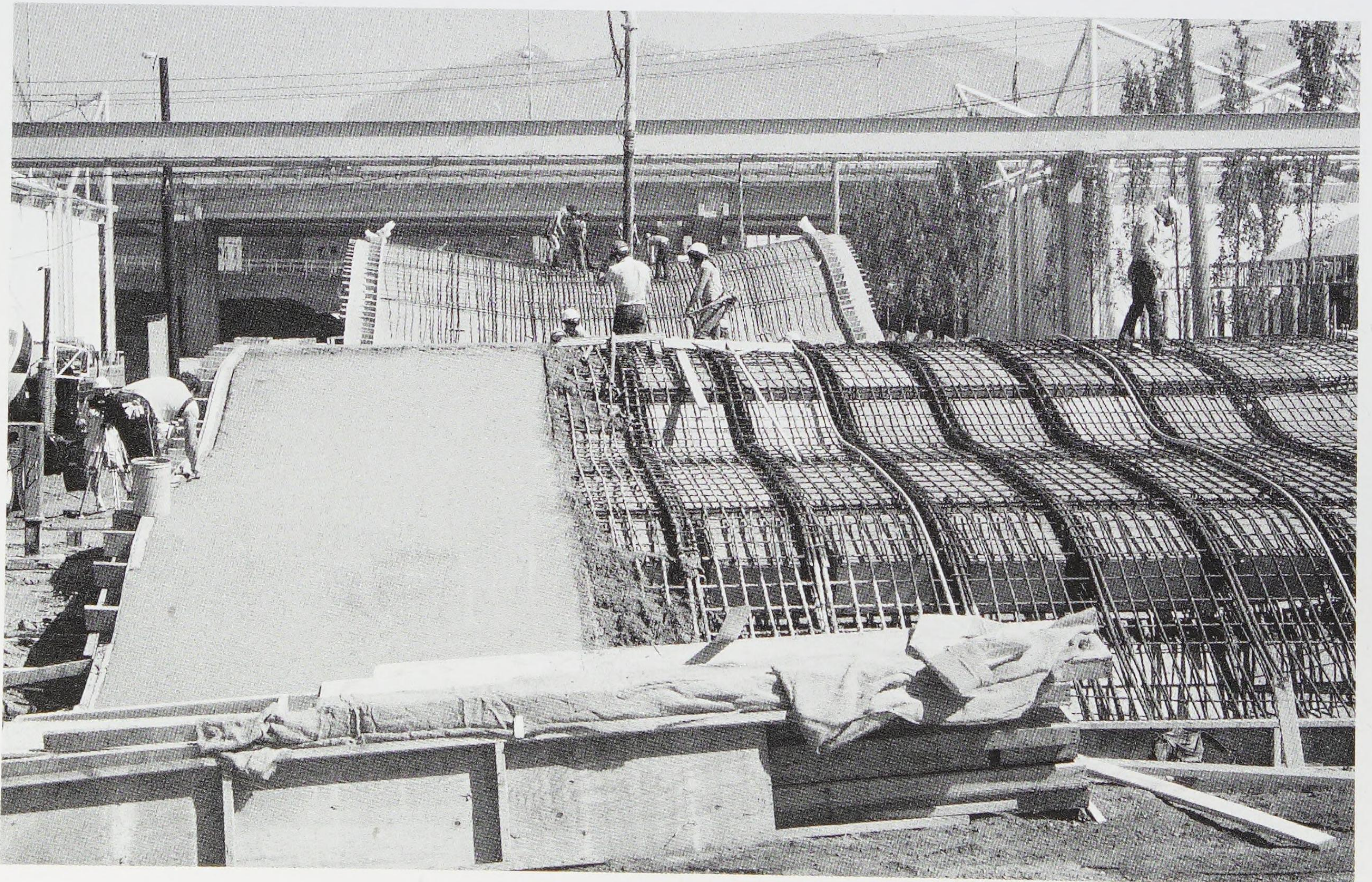
Aerial view of processional with fountain and pool



Aerial view of processional

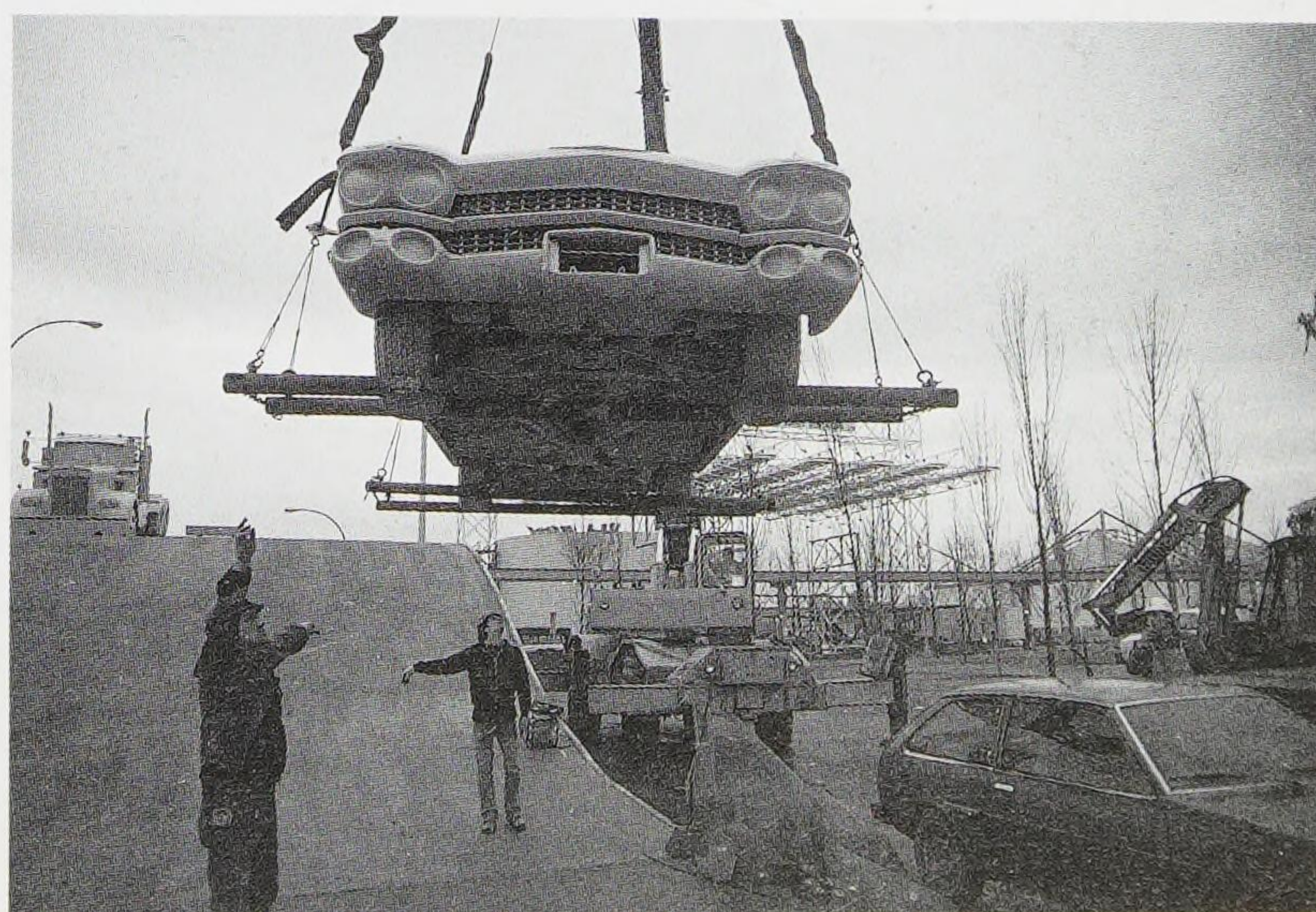


Project under construction





Placement of vehicles on processional

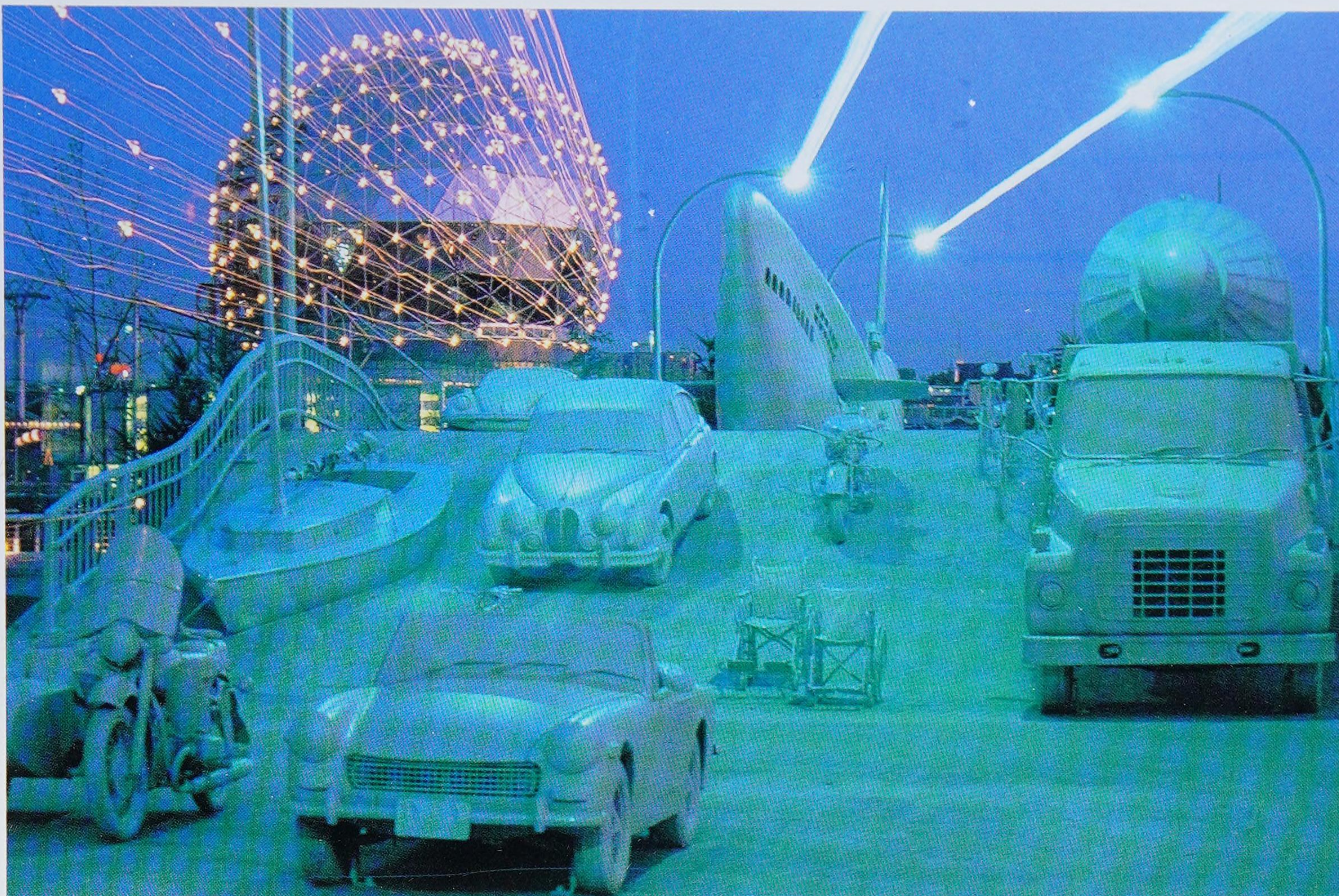




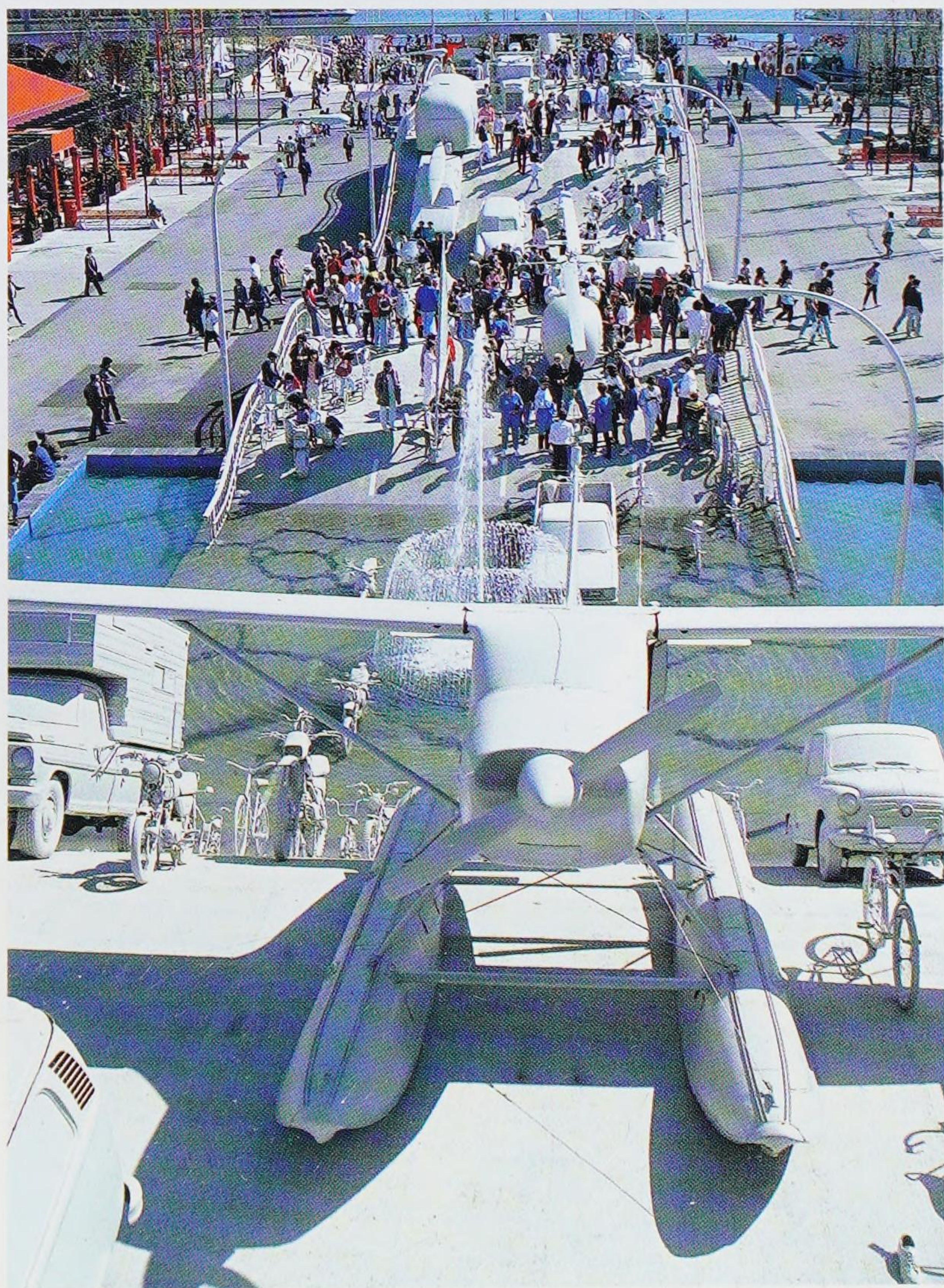
Beginning of processional at Vancouver harbor



End of processional between automobile viaducts



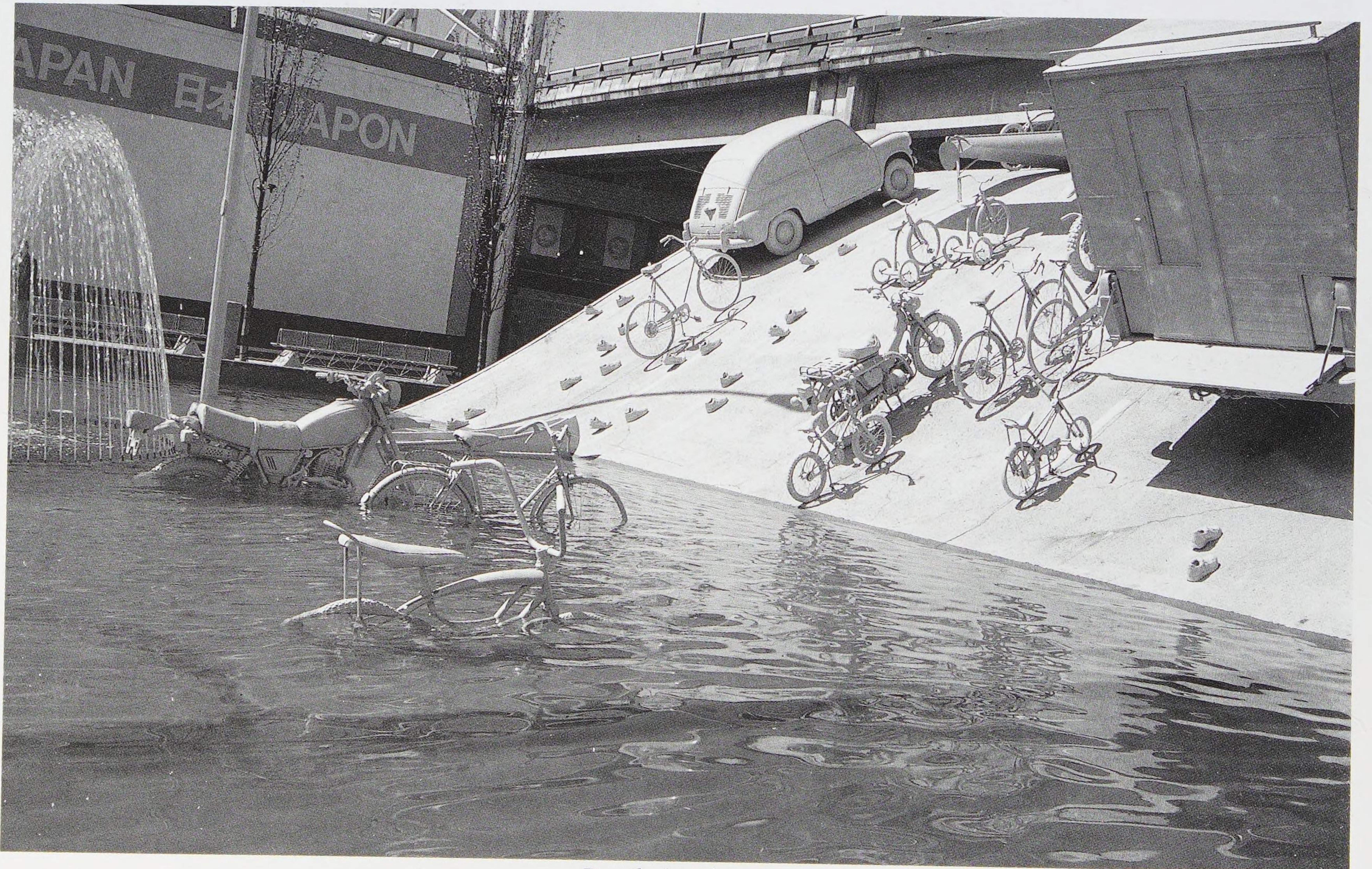
Night view



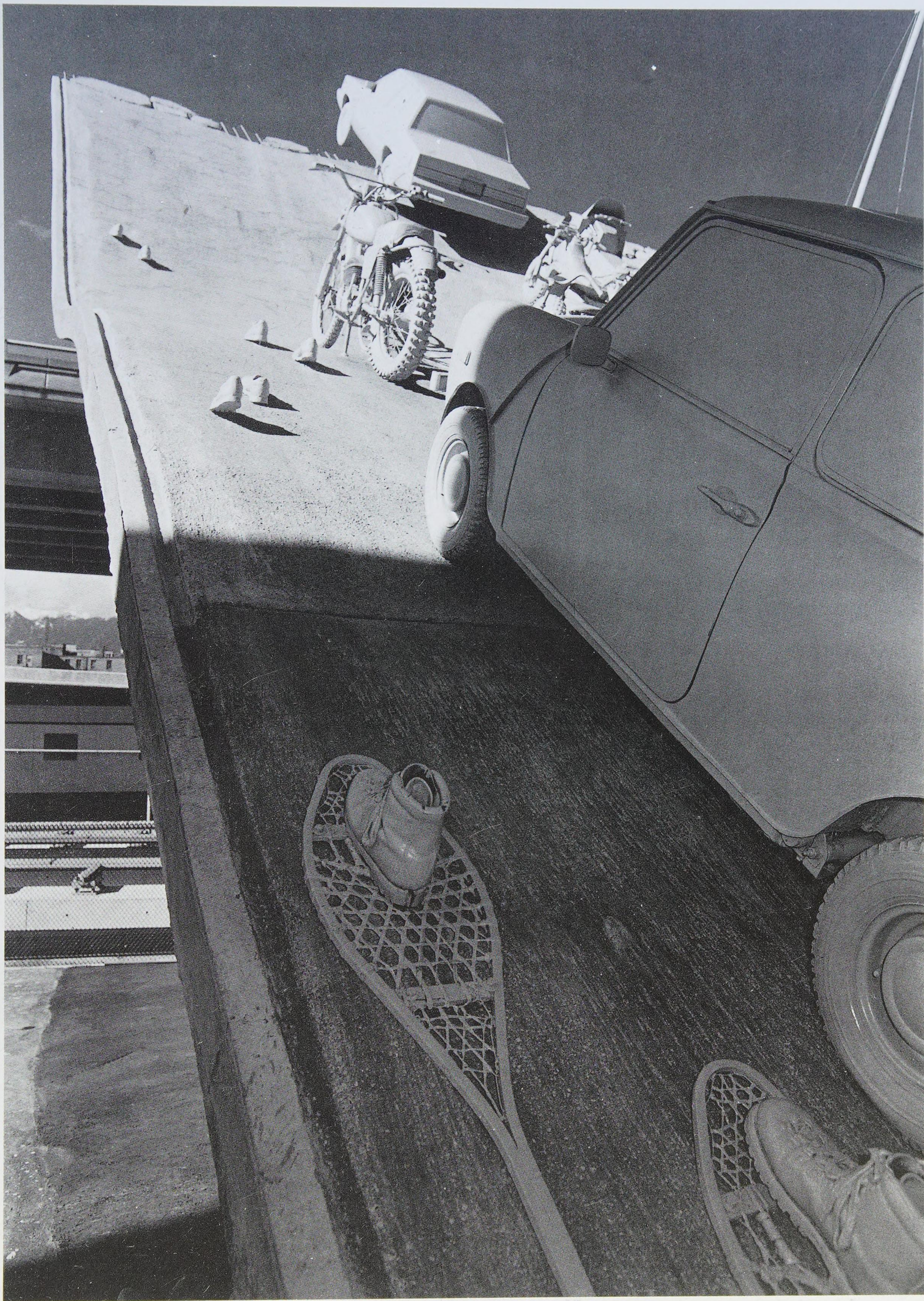
View of procession showing public interaction



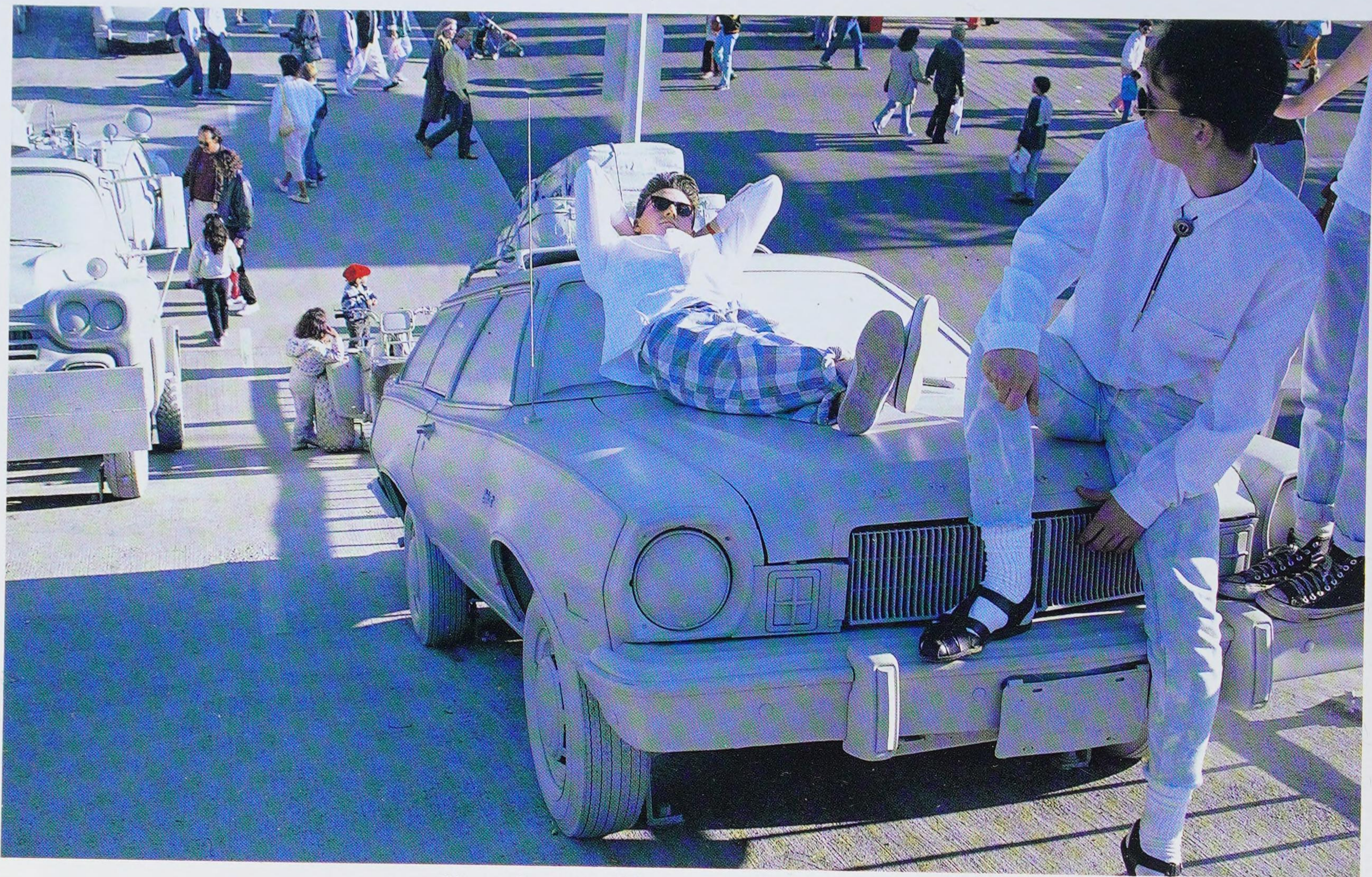
Detail of fountain area



Detail of pool area



End of highway between city viaducts



Views showing public participation with vehicles





PERSHING SQUARE

Los Angeles, California

1986–87

Downtown Los Angeles has always had an identity problem resulting from competition with its more alluring, romantic, and botanically endowed suburbs. For this reason, it seemed appropriate to develop a concept for Pershing Square that would draw on all of the environmental, cultural, and ethnic resources of greater Los Angeles.

When viewed from the air, the city appears to be a vast, gridlike carpet with rumpled corners where the hills surround the central plain. SITE's scheme for Pershing Square is a visual and participatory microcosm of this geometric landscape. The purpose is to compress the Los Angeles experience into a metaphorical "magic carpet."

The grid/carpet plaza is basically flat in the central area, while all of the peripheral edges undulate in symbolic relationship to the mountains. These undulations serve as a source of visual drama; as a means of access for pedestrians to various elevations; and as shelter for the restaurant, the Pershing Square administration, the garage access, and the mid-block entrances. Also, by creating an elevated edge around the plaza, the center seems more tranquil and protected. From the street outside, the wavelike configurations support a rich floral display and shelter a series of fountains. Each of these water features is supplied by waterfalls that emerge from aqua-modules located above on the plaza surface.

To provide a wide selection of botanical and participatory events, the modular grid of the park is used to generate mini-environments. Each mini-environment relates, in botanical collage form, to greater Los Angeles, with its unique vegetation topography, Hispanic legacy, ethnic mix, resources, cinematic fantasy, and automobile culture. These modules also function as cafés, kiosks, trellis-covered gardens, general shelters, and seating areas.

Because of the strategic configuration of the undulating surfaces, both the required Crystal Palace Restaurant and the outdoor performance space are gracefully accommodated without imposing actual buildings on the park. This innovation creates a total fusion of plaza and architecture.

To act as a formal counterpoint to the collagelike freedom of the botanical modules and to provide shade from the sun, the entire central space was designed as a trellis-covered processional. This structure includes water features, service kiosks, and a hierarchy of orientation between the Crystal Palace Restaurant at one end of the plaza and the outdoor performance space at the other.

Consistent with SITE's work in narrative architecture, the Pershing Square idea is conceived as botanical storytelling. The modular plan is a device for visual unity, offering an infinite source of sequential dramas. The modules are like individual or grouped stages, with the plants acting as the performers.

The Pershing Square grid is symbolic of cultural landscapes throughout Los Angeles—Chicano east, Black southwest, Asian midtown, and Caucasian west. The park is intended to harmonize these influences, which are translated into plant materials. The seashore, for example, is represented by the myoporum tree; Hispanic gardens by the bougainvillea and citrus; the Asian by ginkgo trees, bamboo, ferns, and mono grass. The swamp is recalled by such prehistoric plants as reeds, cycads, and ferns, all under the shade of the weeping willow. The tropical tradition is represented by palms and chaparral, and the Angeles National Forest by firs, California wild grape, and cotoneaster.

One of the most dramatic aspects of the SITE concept is the night illumination. The plaza grid lines are lit from within, producing an effect similar to that of the city at night when viewed from the air or from the Hollywood Hills. This is achieved by five-way light sources at each grid intersection, conducted through linear white plastic tubing embedded in the paving surface.

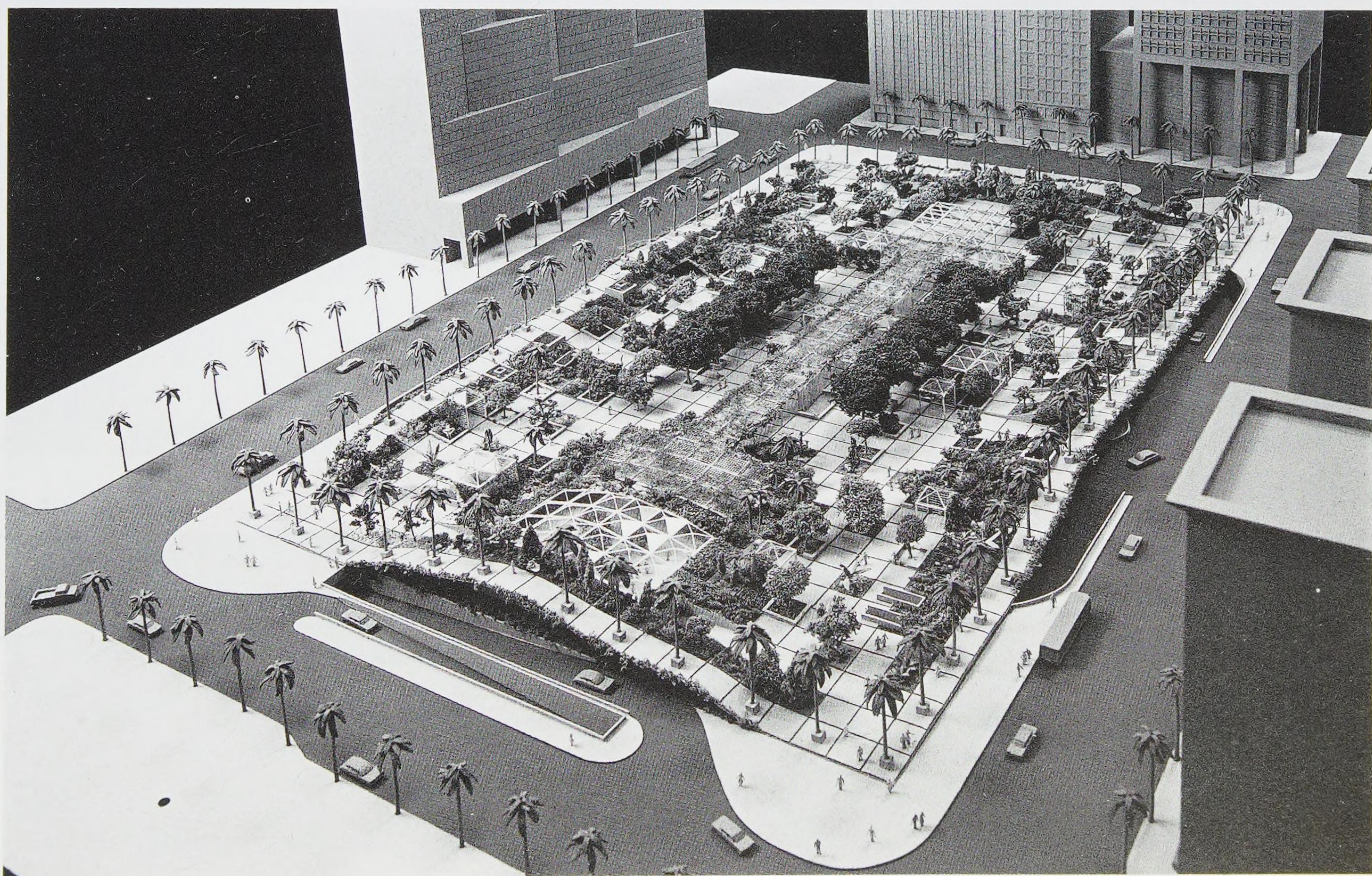
The structural method for supporting the undulating cantilevered edges of the park is cast-in-place concrete with an inverted, deep-joist slab system. The 13½-foot square of the surface modules is designed to align with the garage columns underground. Weight distribution of the cantilever is accomplished with transfer beams below deck.

A selection of the surface modules are reserved for artworks, performances, flower shows, and temporary exhibitions. They are equipped with electricity and fittings for canopy shelters.

SITE's Pershing Square is a direct response to the voice of the community as expressed in a public-opinion poll. The overall message was that Los Angeles wants a *real* park, a park for the people. The people want shade, a lot of foliage, places to sit, eat, and meet friends, a secure place, no large buildings on the site, and a reflection of the variety, spirit, independence, and creativity of Los Angeles.



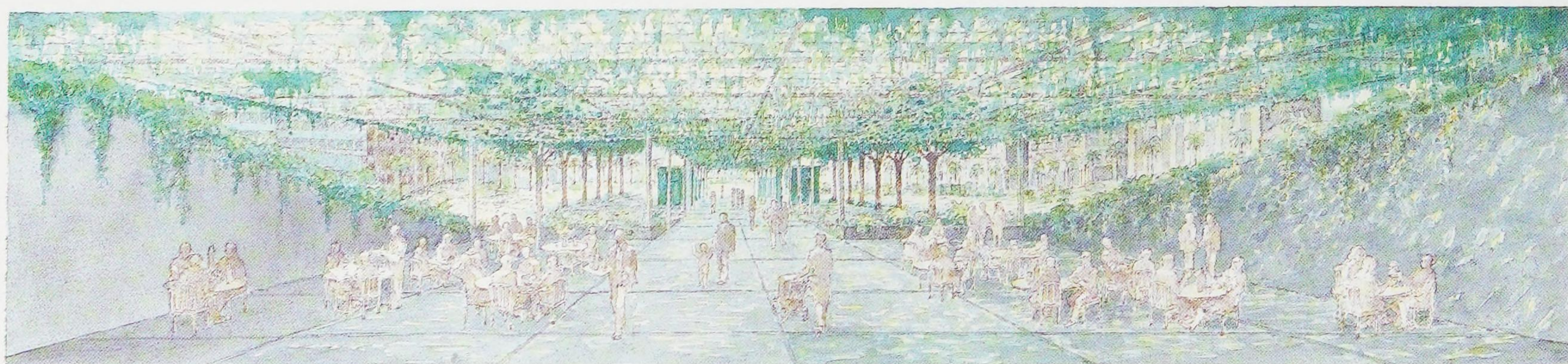
Aerial view of existing Pershing Square Park



Aerial view of model



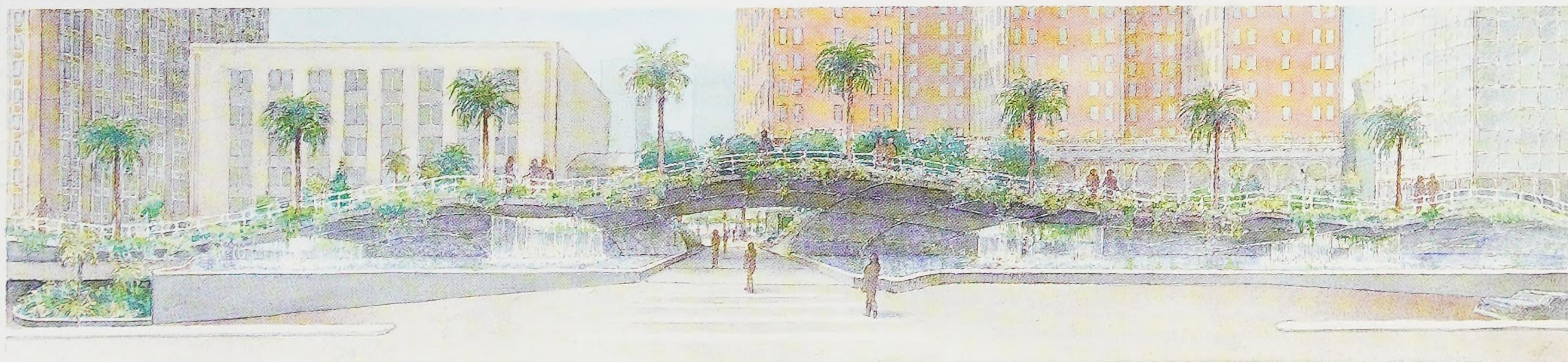
Study of restaurant interior exiting onto processional



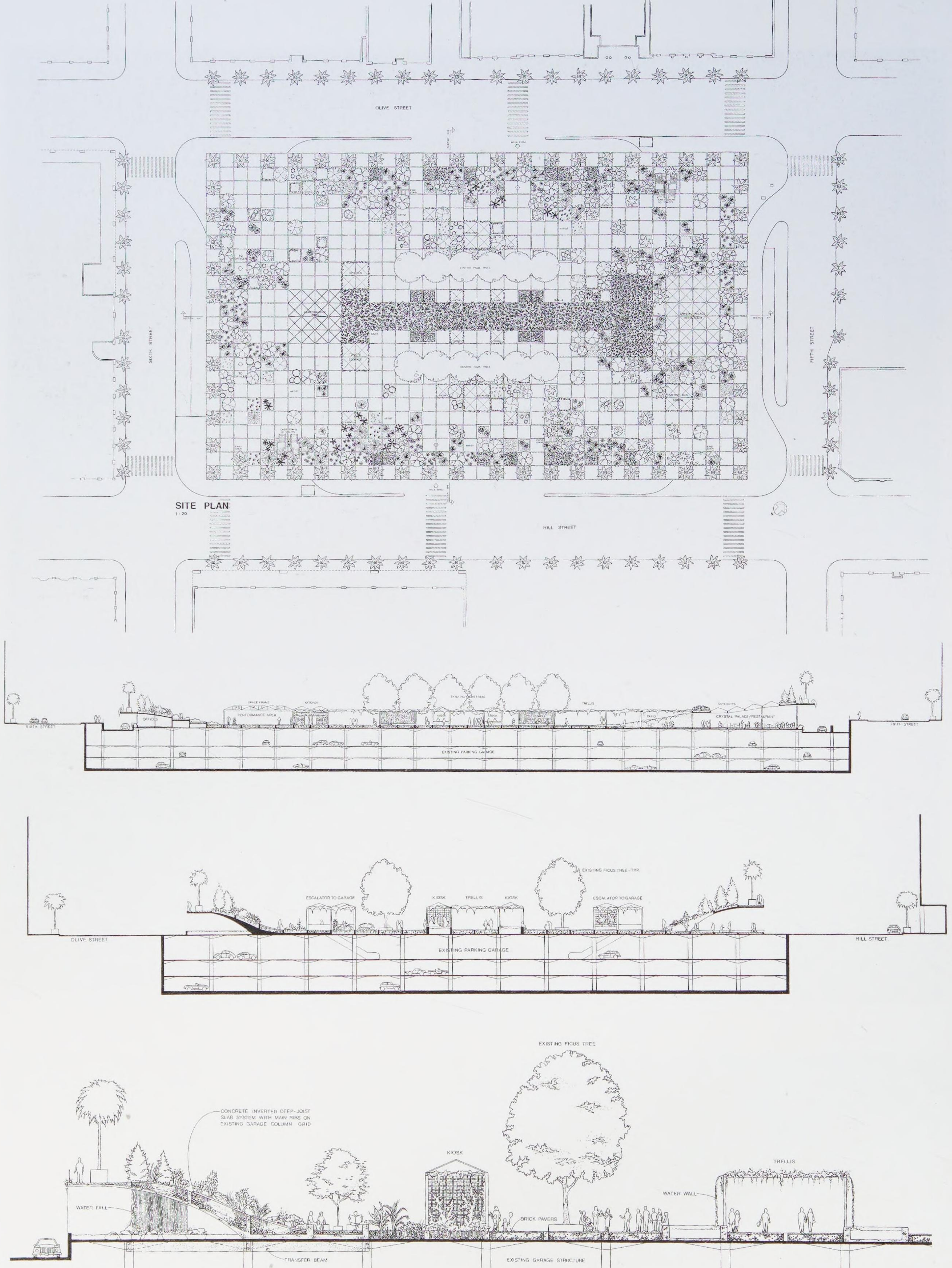
View of main processional with shade trellis



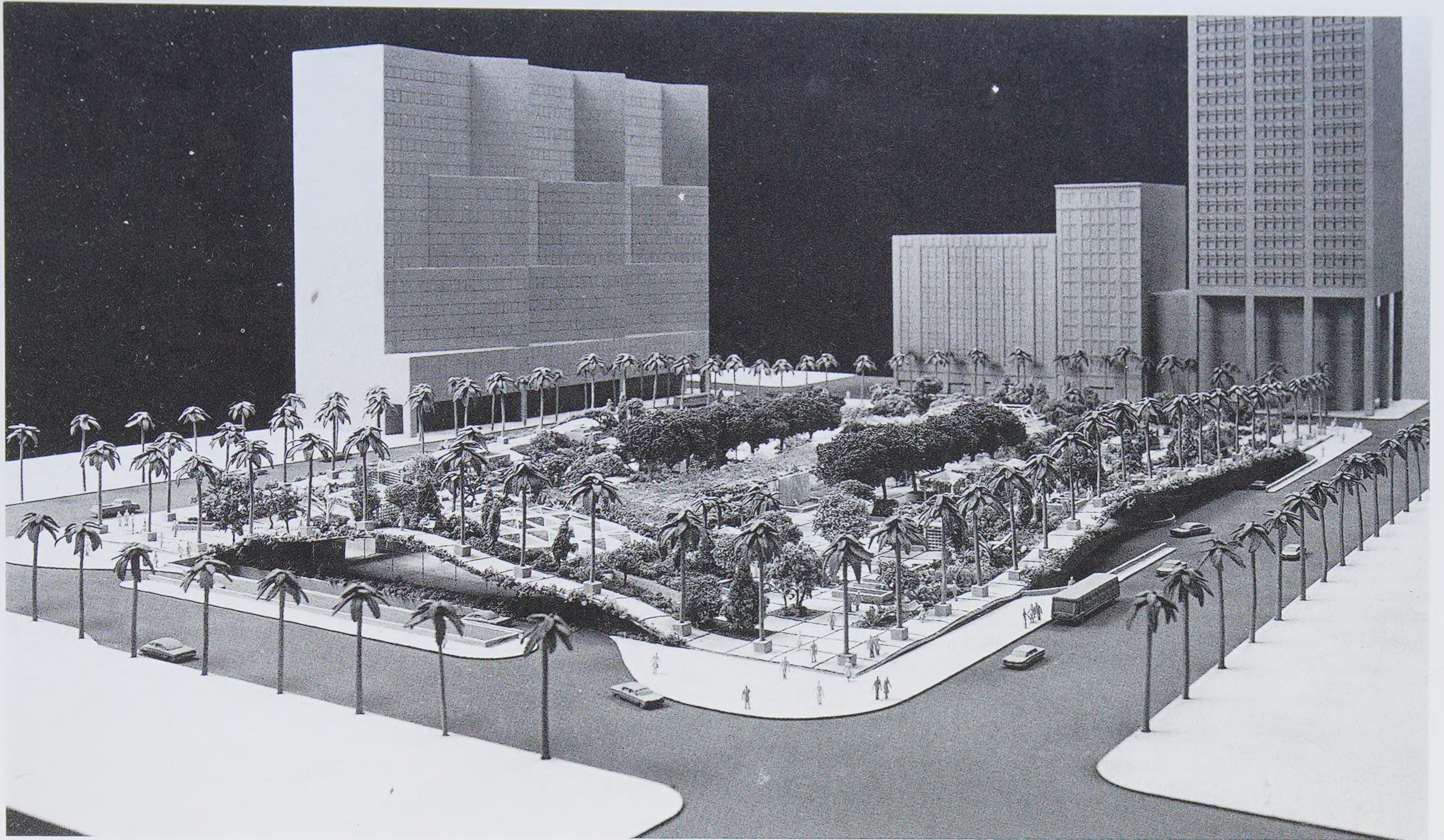
Aerial view of model showing edge condition and restaurant



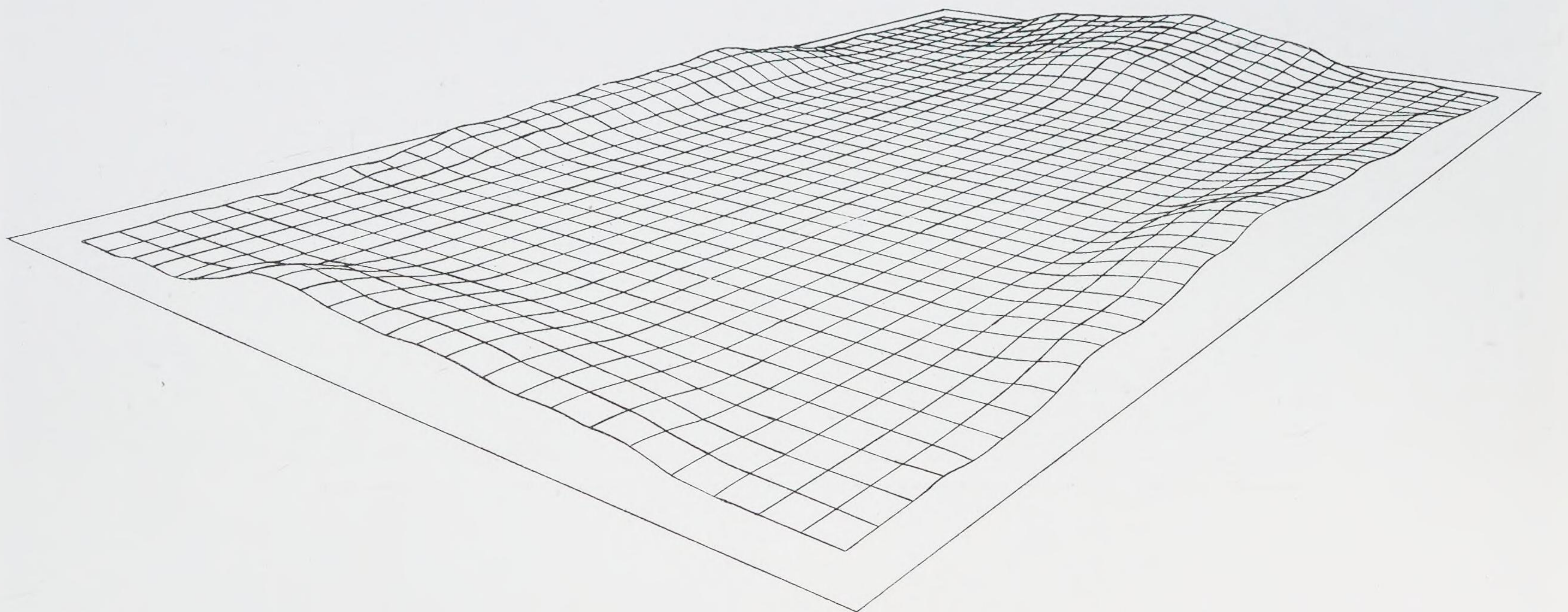
View toward Biltmore Hotel with floral edge and entrance



Plan and sections



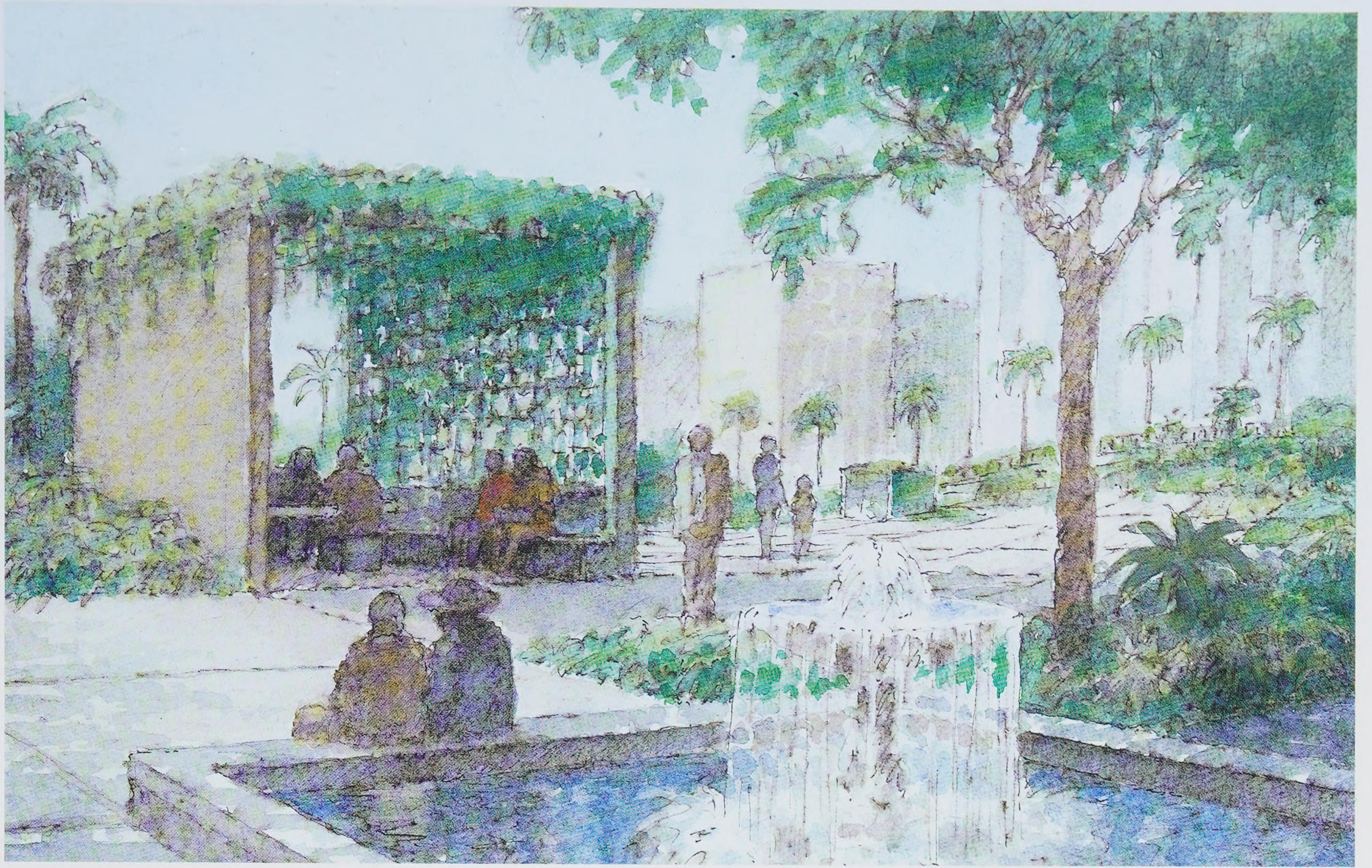
General view of model



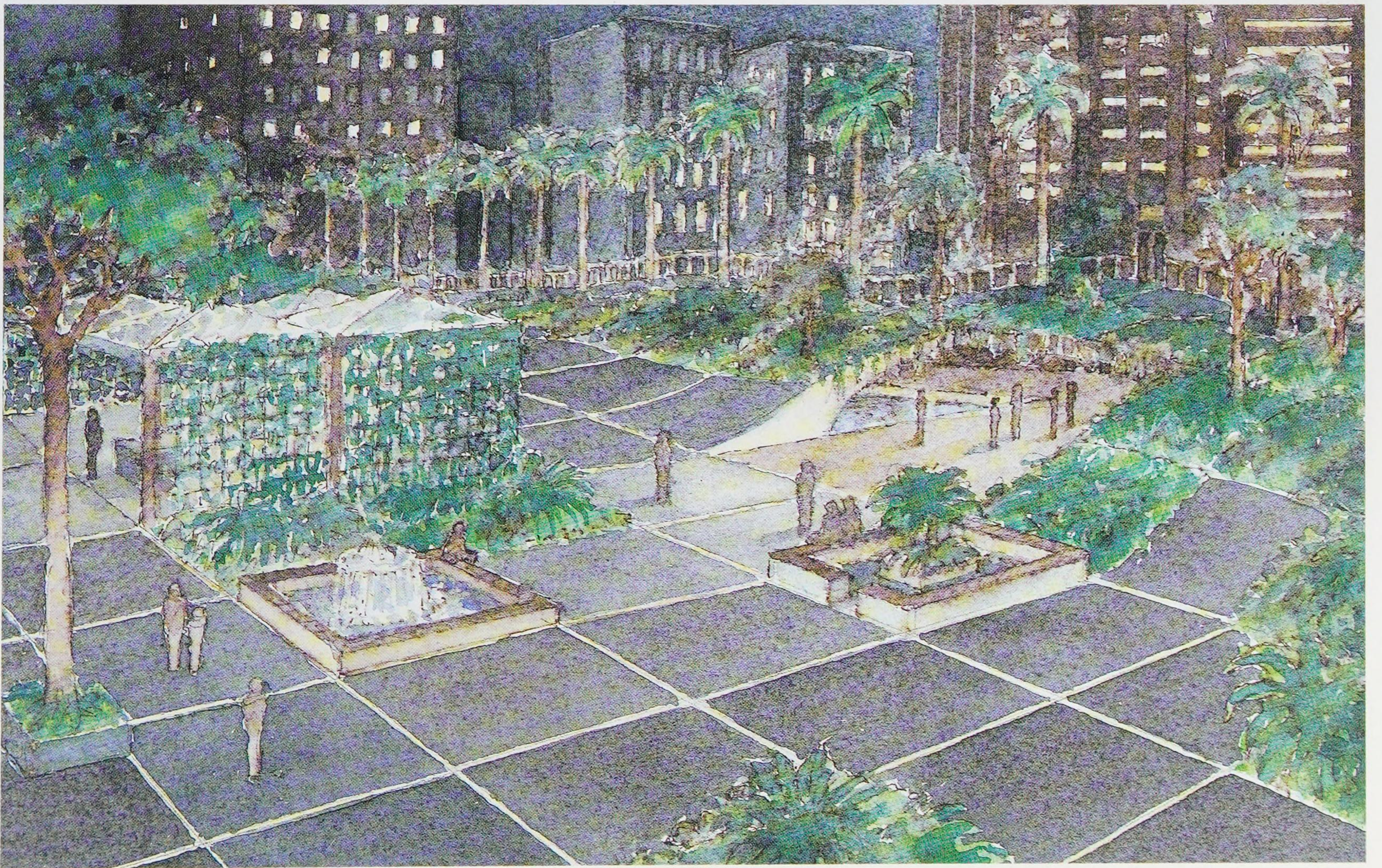
Grid configuration based on topography of greater Los Angeles



General view of performance space



Typical seating areas and kiosk



Night view showing paving grid illumination

SWATCH RETAIL STORE

Nantucket, Massachusetts

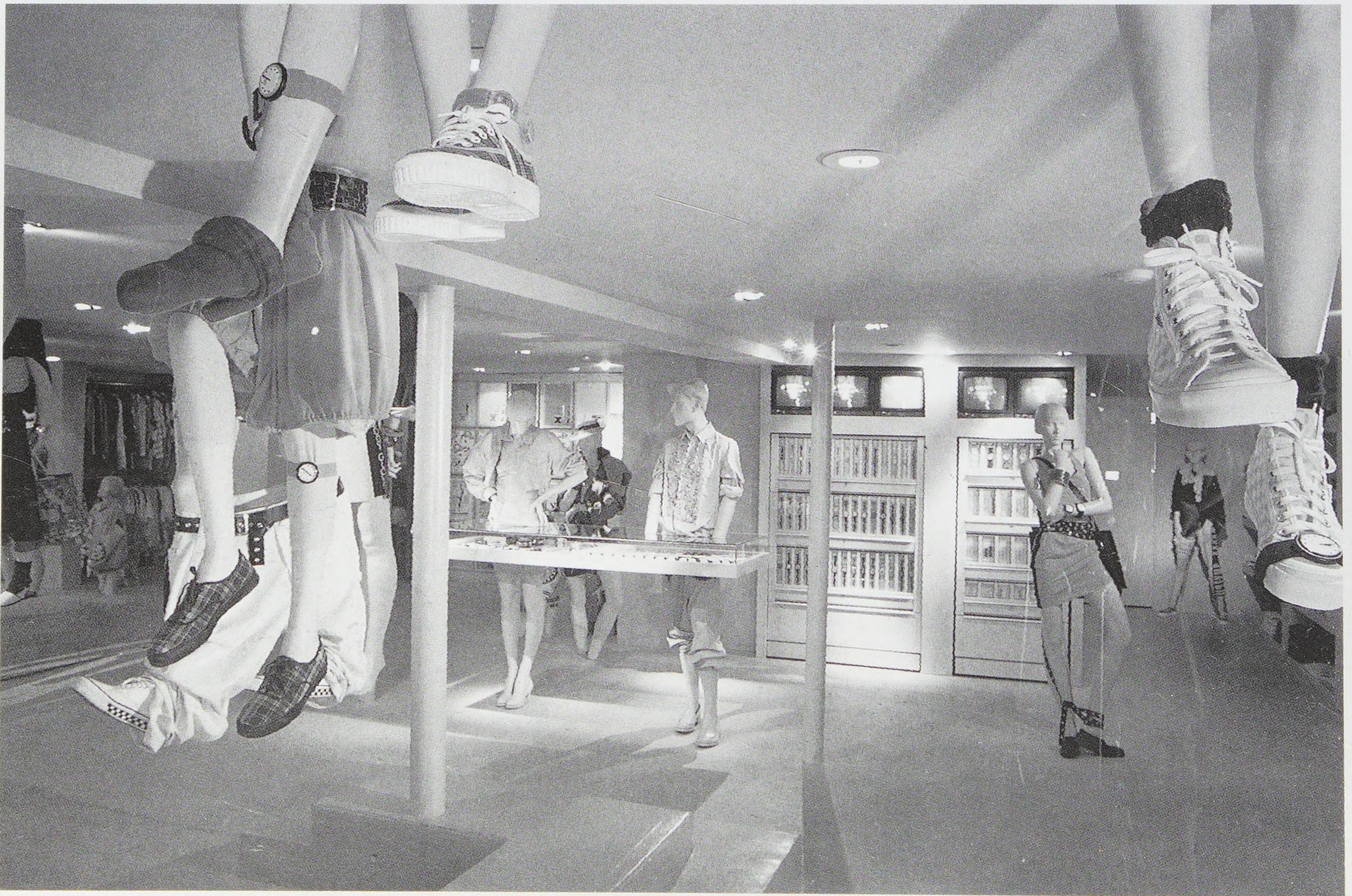
1987

This merchandise showroom, commissioned by Parallel Marketing Corp. for Swatch Products, for the display of Swatch watches and sportswear is located in the commercial district of Nantucket Island, Massachusetts. Originally a small storefront (800 square feet with seven-foot ceilings), the space presented a severe physical problem for conversion into a retail facility. The SITE concept takes advantage of these limitations and transforms them into a functional and psychologically oriented showcase environment.

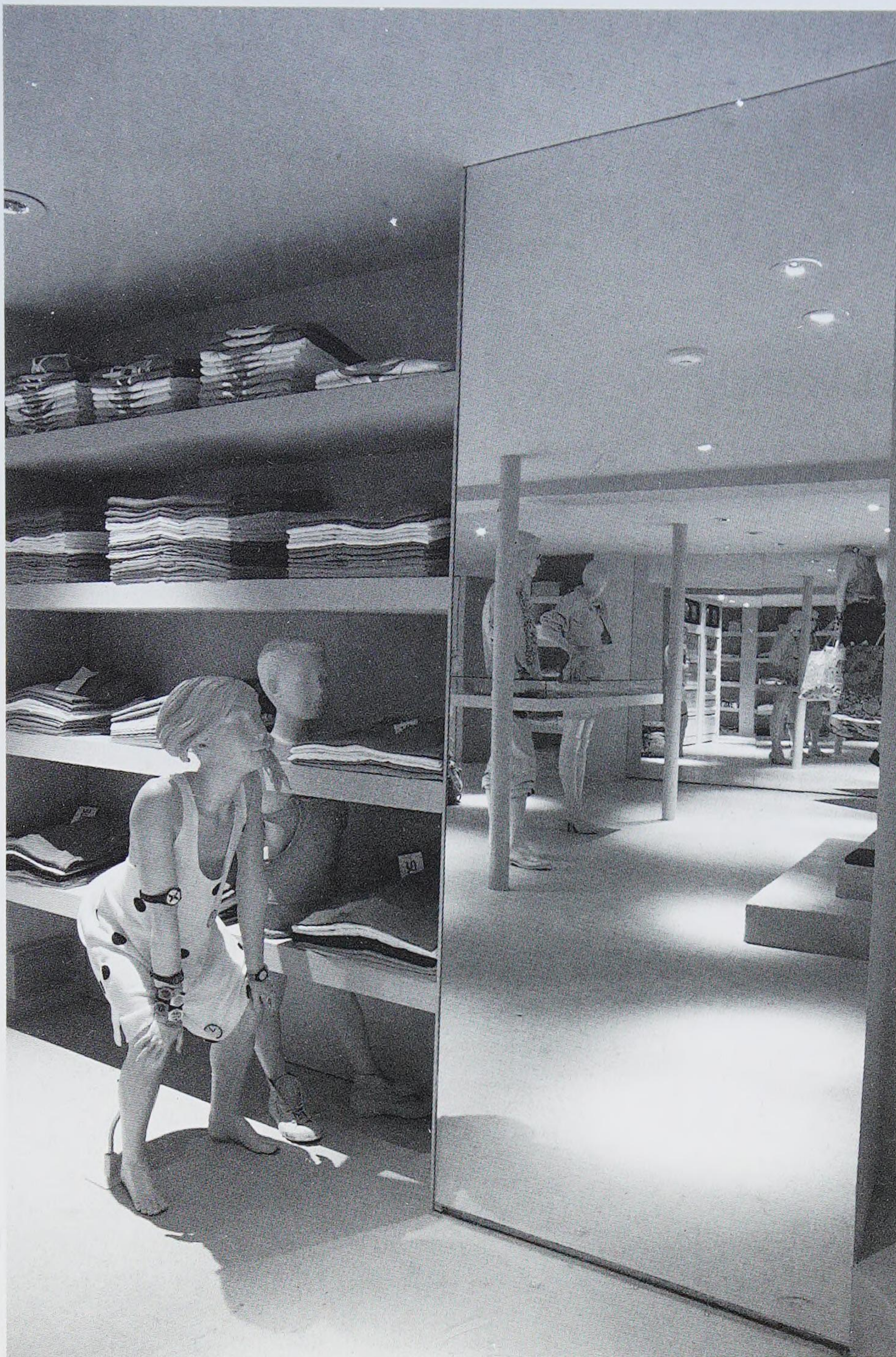
Because Swatch caters to an international and youthful clientele, the showroom space is designed to suggest a fluid and active atmosphere, whether the store is occupied or empty. This has been achieved by means of a parade of human figures that seem to be in motion (using highly re-

alistic mannequins monochromed in light gray to match the rest of the interior). Beginning at the floor level toward the back of the store, these bodies form a floating processional into the central area, and then move upward into the ceiling as they approach the front shop window.

This innovation offers unique retailing advantages. The surreal aspect of the figures and the inclusion of large wall mirrors transform a potentially oppressive situation into a space where both walls and ceiling seem to disappear. At the same time, the body fragments offer convenient display fixtures located at eye level. In addition, SITE has designed watch showcases utilizing the theme of the human figure and an extremely functional system of vending units for timepieces and T-shirts.



General view of interior showing suspended figures

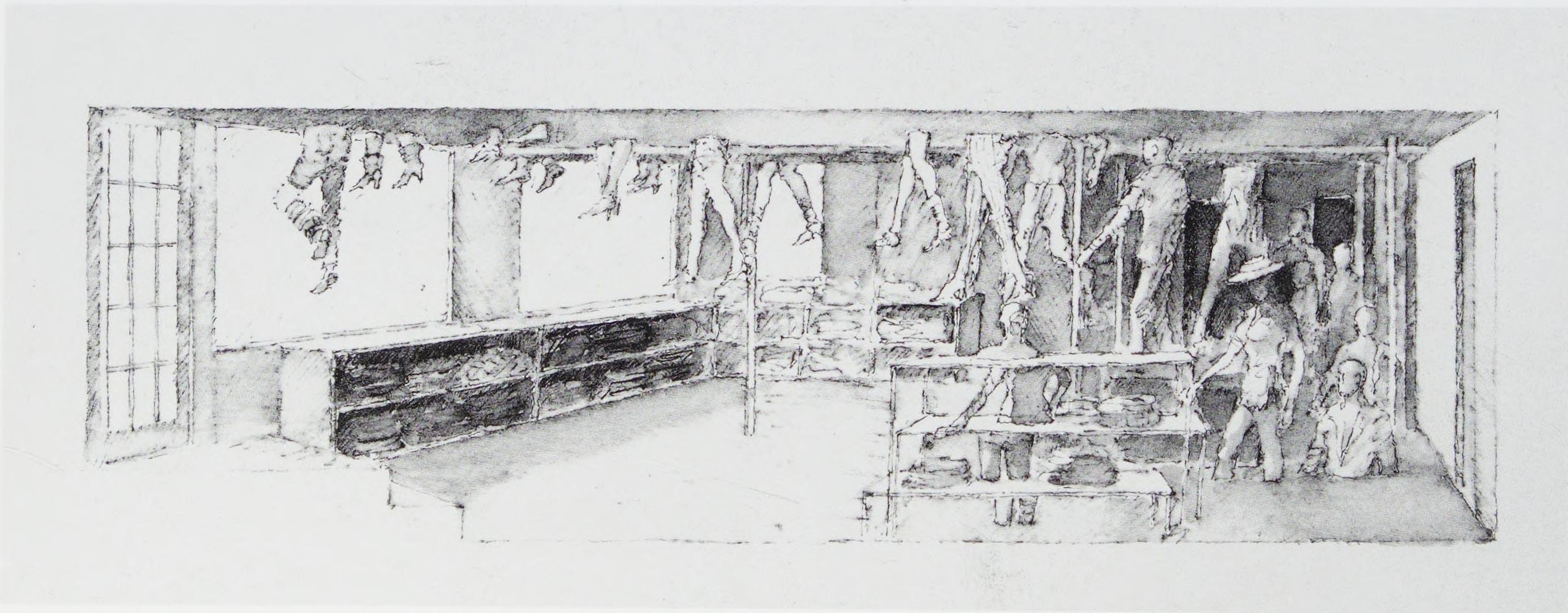


Details of uses of mannequin figures

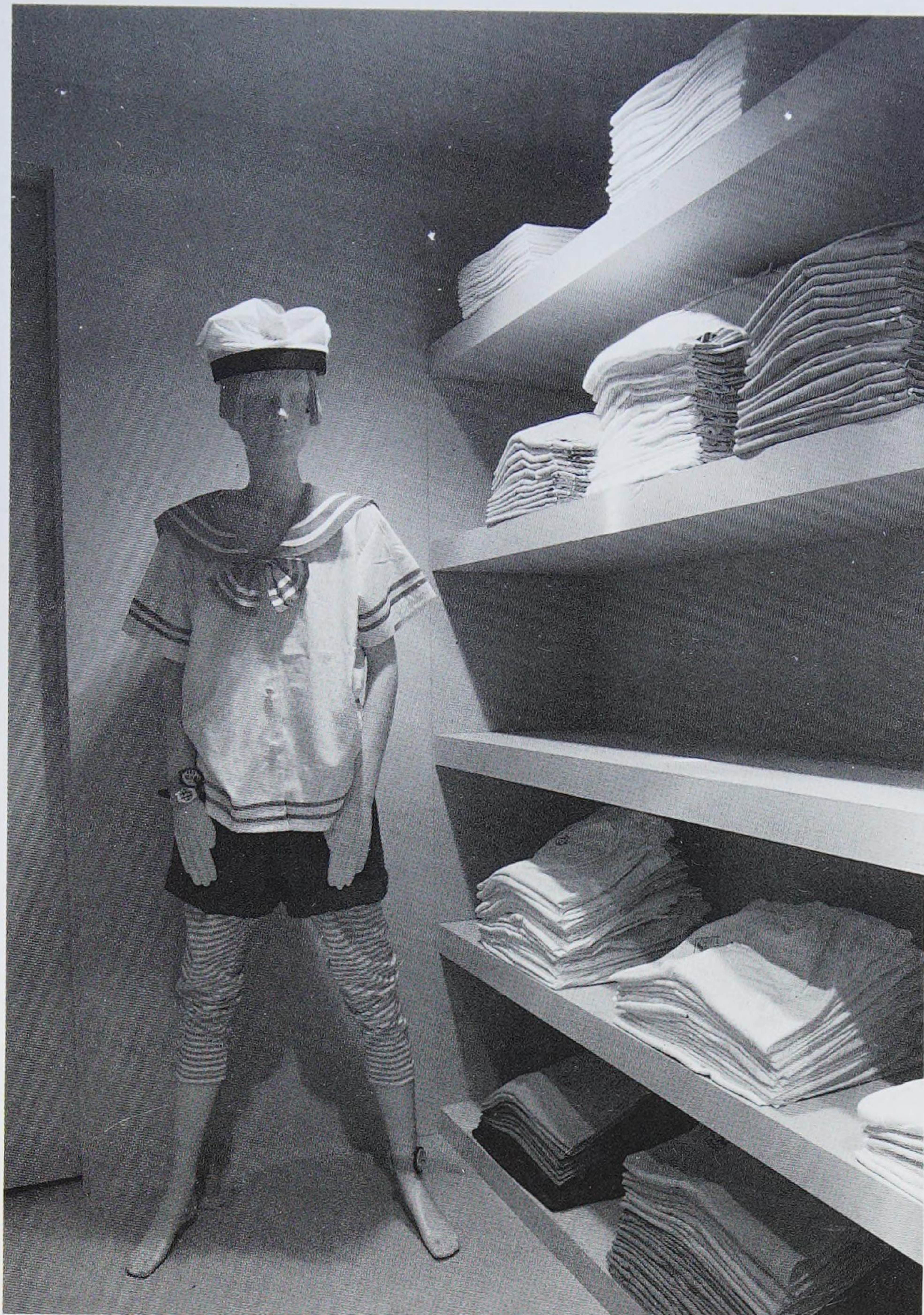




General view of interior with suspended mannequins



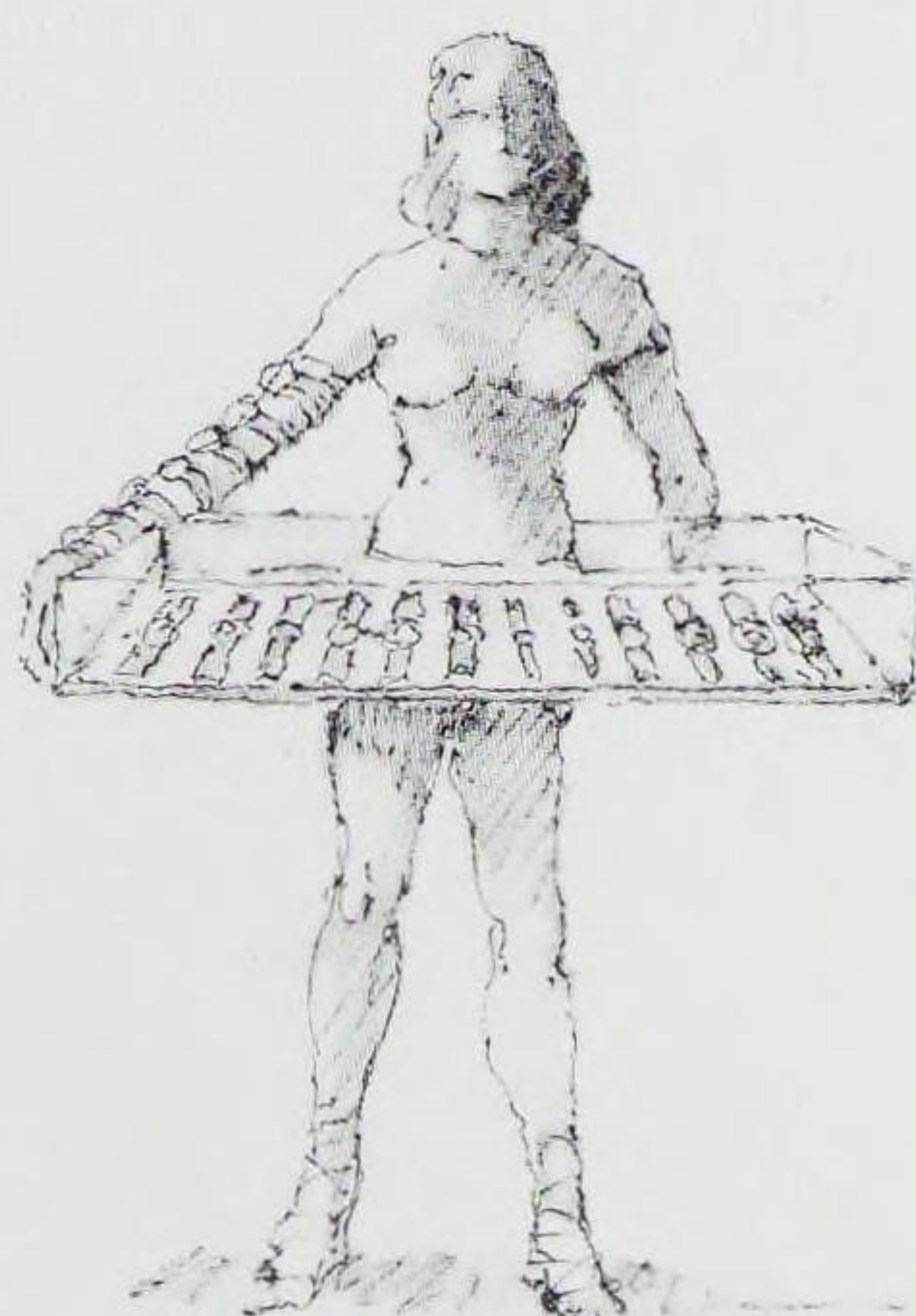
Sketch of interior space



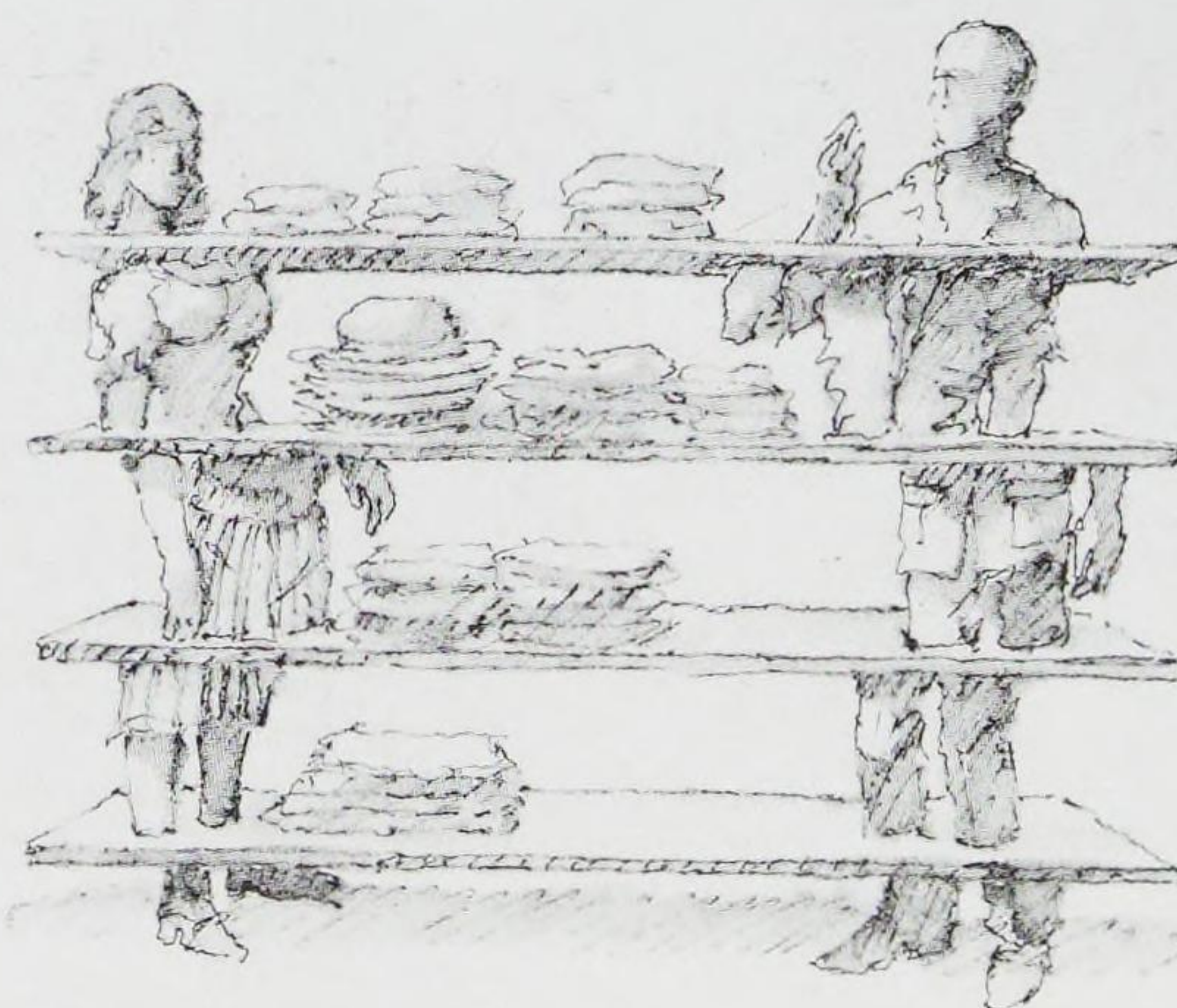
Detail of mannequin and shelving



WATCH DISPLAY



WATCH DISPLAY FIXTURE



SHELF FIXTURE

SWATCH - NANTUCKET SHOP

SITE JW. '87

Sketches of Swatch displays

ALLSTEEL FURNITURE SHOWROOM

Long Island City, New York
1987

The Allsteel showroom is located in the newly renovated IDC/NY in Long Island City. The physical space is part of a large factory structure, with heavy columns and an overall industrial feeling.

Consistent with SITE's past work for manufacturing corporations, the concept for Allsteel is developed as a visual and psychological extension of the products and aspirations of an industry, and the elements that characterize Allsteel furniture and office systems in particular: integrity of construction, classic design, consistent performance as a company for 75 years, and the associations connected with steel as a material.

Because the floor space available for product display was limited, SITE decided to utilize the ceiling as the major area of design innovation. The entire ceiling is a skeletal reflection in steel of the finished products and office enclosures on display. Each object made by Allsteel has been stripped of

all non-steel materials in order to reveal the core of the products and the process of construction. The raw steel ceiling is a biographical counterpart of the display floor, telling the story of Allsteel products in the terms of a massive constructivist sculpture.

To extend this dialogue on the floor plane and walls, pieces of Allsteel furniture have been displayed against glass walls, using the transparent partitions as invisible bisectors. On one side of the glass, the objects are complete (with upholstery and painted finishes). On the other side, they are reduced to their raw steel skeletons.

The Allsteel concept is an endeavor to capture the feeling of the manufacturing process, explain product design and construction, celebrate the beauty of steel, express the IDC/NY industrial-loft environment, and synthesize these elements into an environmental-art piece.



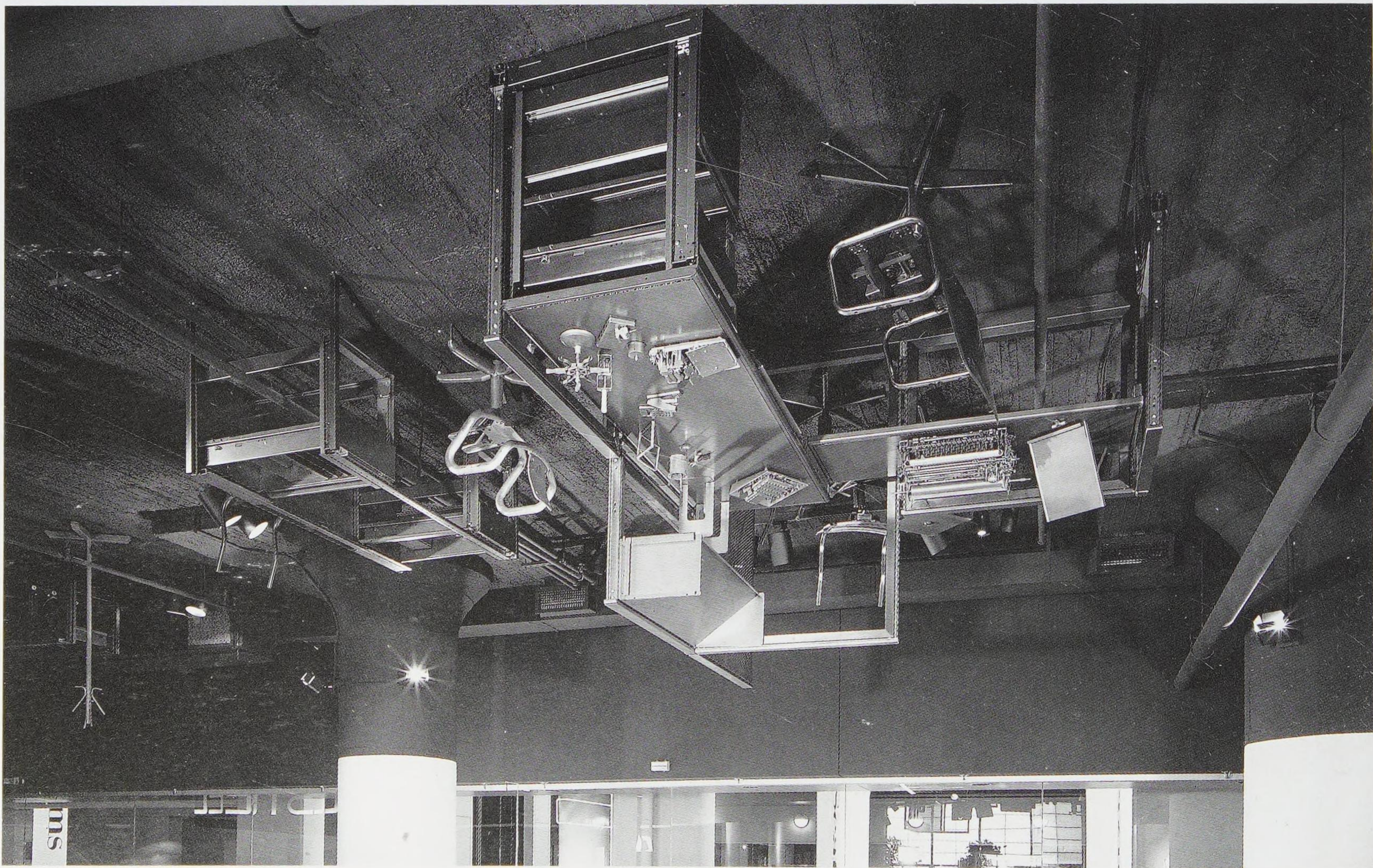
Allsteel sign constructed from rolls of raw steel



General view of salesroom ceiling with raw steel chairs



Glass partition bisecting furniture to demonstrate finished and unfinished products



Ceiling detail of raw steel furniture



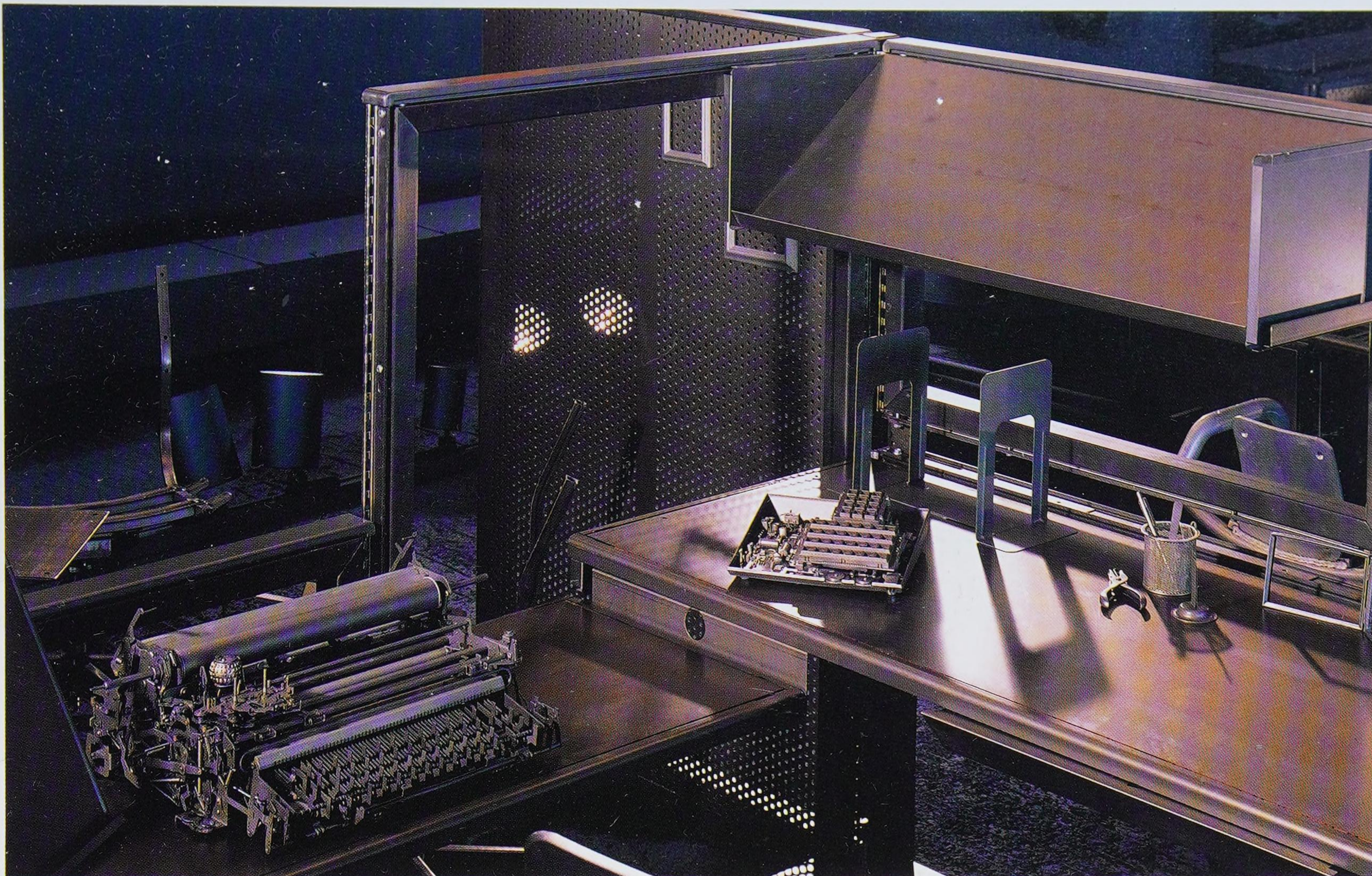
General view of furniture display area showing relationship between floor and ceiling



General view of showroom area with raw steel ceiling



Detail of chair intersected by glass wall



Upside-down view of ceiling detail



Detail of desk intersected by glass wall

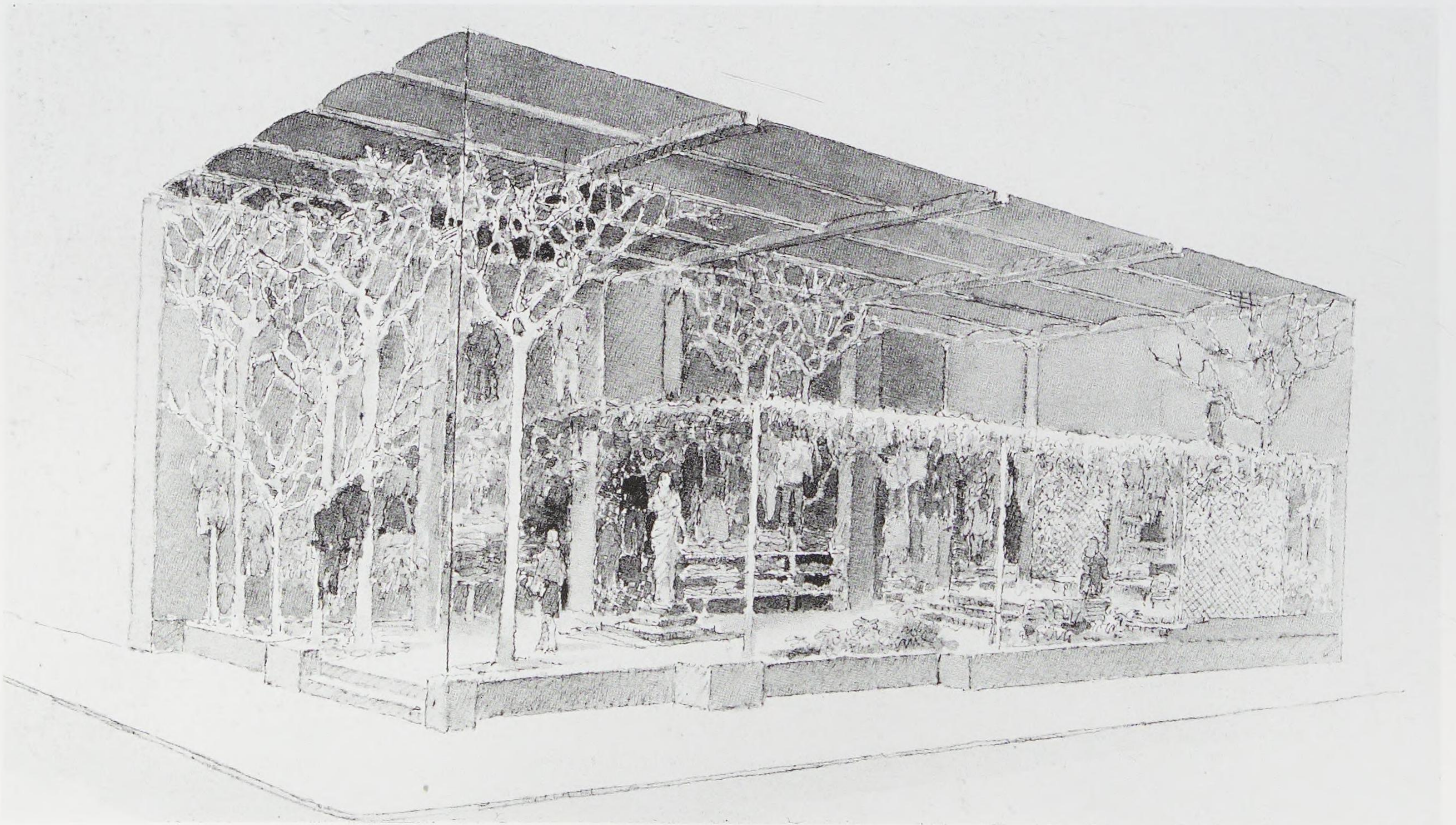
WILLIWEAR RETAIL STORE

New York, New York
1988

This Fifth Avenue retail store for WilliWear is an extension of the street-life theme SITE established in 1982 for the men's and women's wholesale showrooms. In these facilities, SITE decided that the color and flair of this leading sportswear manufacturer's garments should be heightened by a context that offered both a muted background and a strong sculptural presence. The women's showroom reflected the quiet streets of Greenwich Village, while the men's interior was based on the rough structures and textures of the waterfront. Each showroom dealt with a dialogue about inside and outside.

Since the new retail store is on a busy street, it seemed

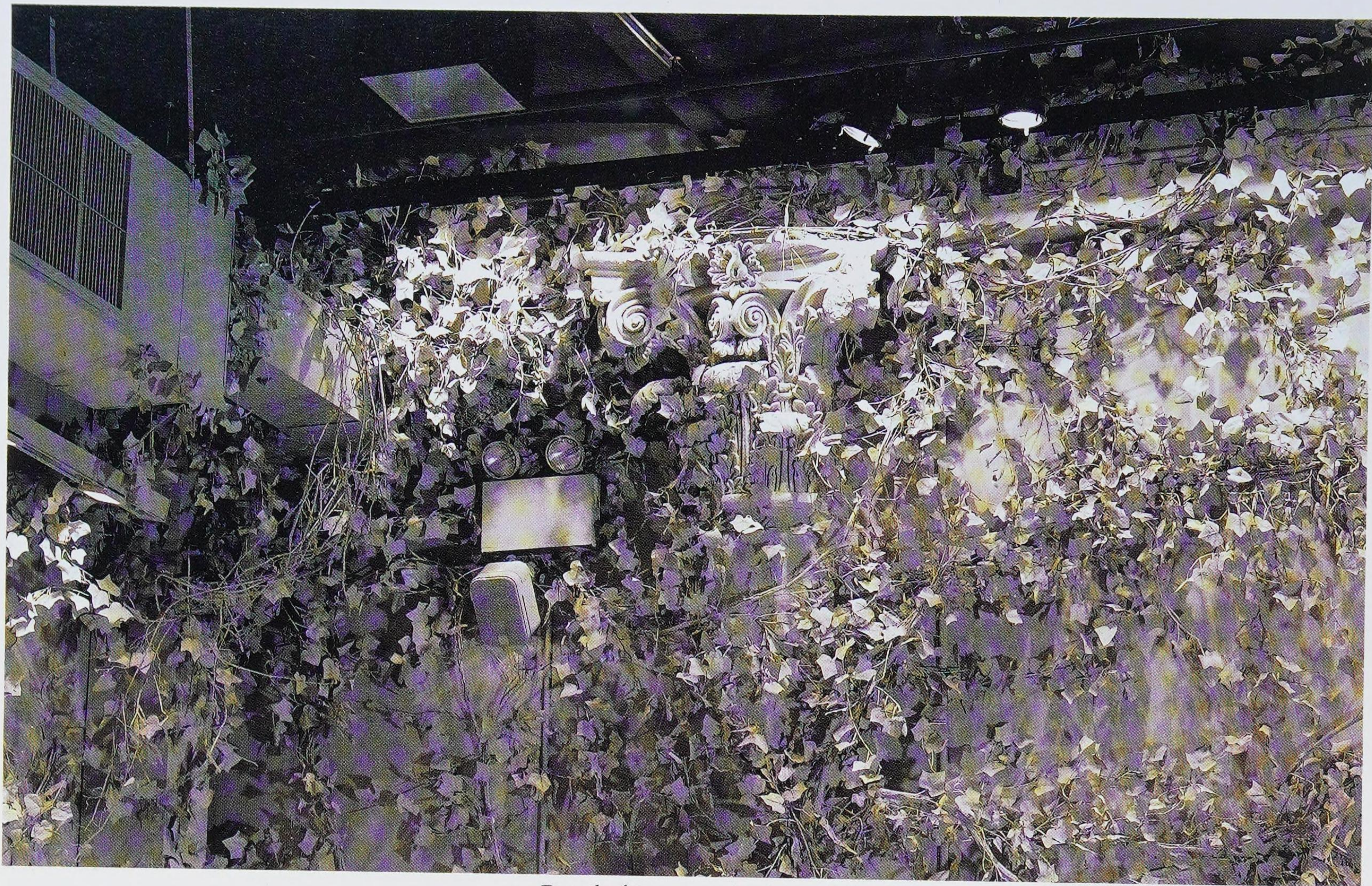
appropriate to develop a theme around the peaceful ambience of the garden but with an ironic edge, as in the earlier showrooms. Retaining the monochromatic environment of the wholesale spaces, this interior-as-exterior capitalizes on the textures of nature to create a neutral yet richly varied showcase for WilliWear fashions. Rather than being invaded by intrusive architectural additions, the entire store is filled with vines and leaves, almost as though it had succumbed to nature. To bring more focus on the uniqueness of this phenomenon, the ivy is allowed to envelop all of the columns, walls, display fixtures, and even the store mannequins.



Sketch of WilliWear Park store concept



Store mannequins enveloped by ivy



Detail of ivy around column



General view of store interior



General views of store interior



SUN AND EARTH EXPOSITION CENTER

Yokohama, Japan
1988

This project, commissioned by Japan's Cosmo Oil Company, is for the development of a 128,000-square-meter landfill area on Yokohama's waterfront opposite the main city harbor. The program calls for a public park and an educational/recreational facility dedicated to the resources of the earth and the translation of energy into technological progress. Cosmo's intent is for the scheme to express earth, sea, and sun.

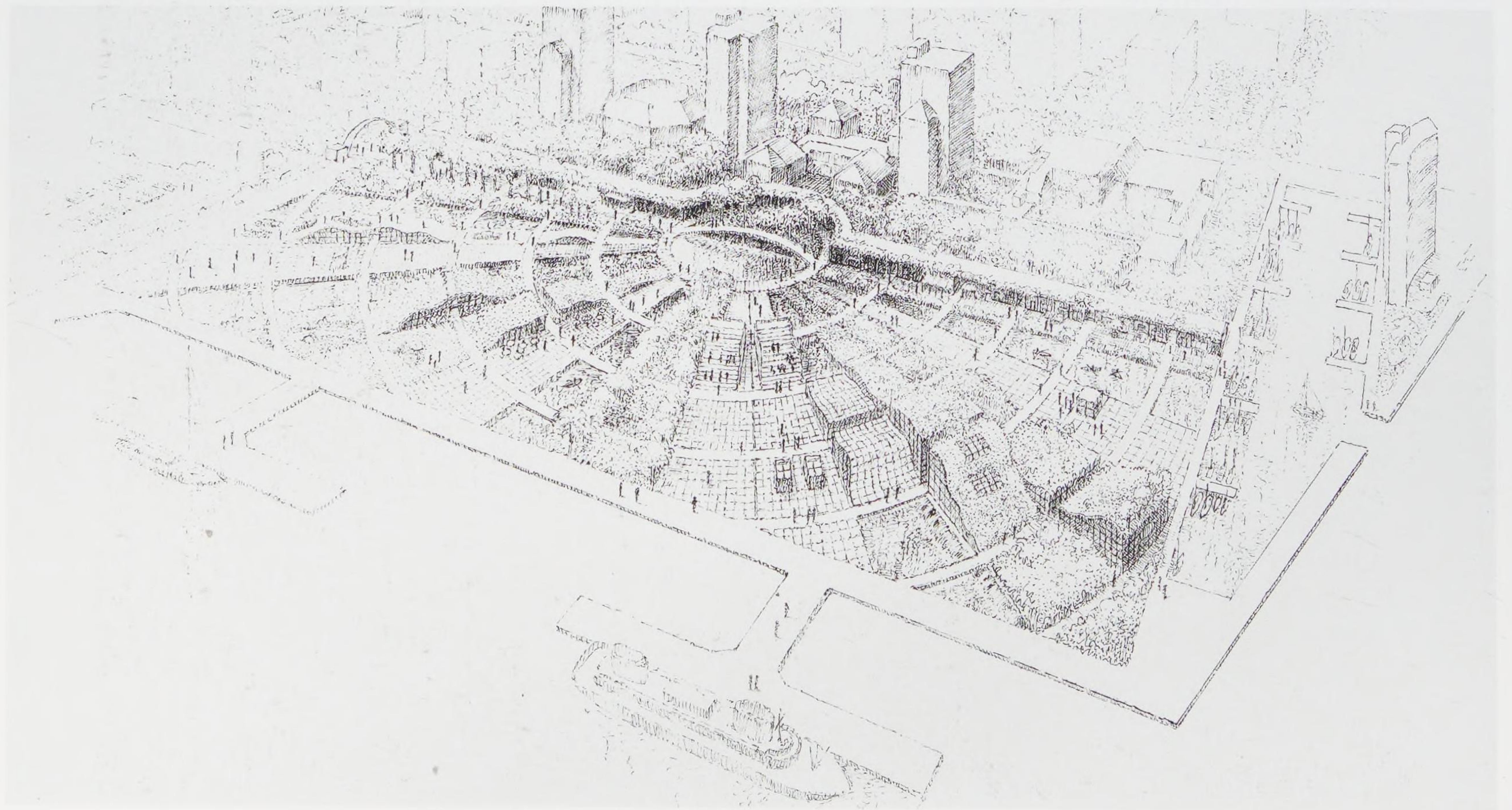
SITE's concept for the Sun and Earth Exposition Center proposes a unification of the entire property by means of a bold, symbolic plan that suggests the shape of an expanding universe. This fan-shaped image, with its radial design, alludes to a diagram of the cosmos as well as Japan's traditional view of its identity as the "land of the rising sun." This plan accommodates a varied choice of pleasurable and instructive environments without losing a sense of the whole.

The center of the project is a circular landscape area at the southern edge of the site, directly confronting a commercial and residential complex that has already been designed. Measuring 100 meters in diameter, this circle is divided into two parts, half vegetation and half water. The center is flanked on both sides by a theme-shop district, spanning the full width of the site from entrance arch to boat

harbor. Radiating from this core, a series of 17 flared sections of paving, landscape, and water define the land surface. These expanding configurations, symbolically related to the rays of the sun, offer a variety of plaza activities and, in some cases, rise from the grade level to become undulating shelters for an automobile exhibition hall, an aqua palace for swimming and bathing, a corporate information center on energy exploration, and other cultural and entertainment facilities.

Radial walkways bisect the flared surfaces, giving pedestrians lateral access to all areas of the exposition center and providing leisure environments where visitors can find more intimate settings for eating, strolling, and gazing at the panoramic vistas of the harbor. The walkways also become bridges over the various canals.

The major innovation of the SITE concept is the way buildings function as extensions of the land surface. Avoiding the frequent mistake of superimposing conventional Western architectural styles on a Japanese context, this project treats the entire site as a metaphor for the cosmos. Architecture, as such, does not exist as an intrusion; rather, all shelter melts into its surroundings and conveys economic, ecological, and cultural links between East and West.



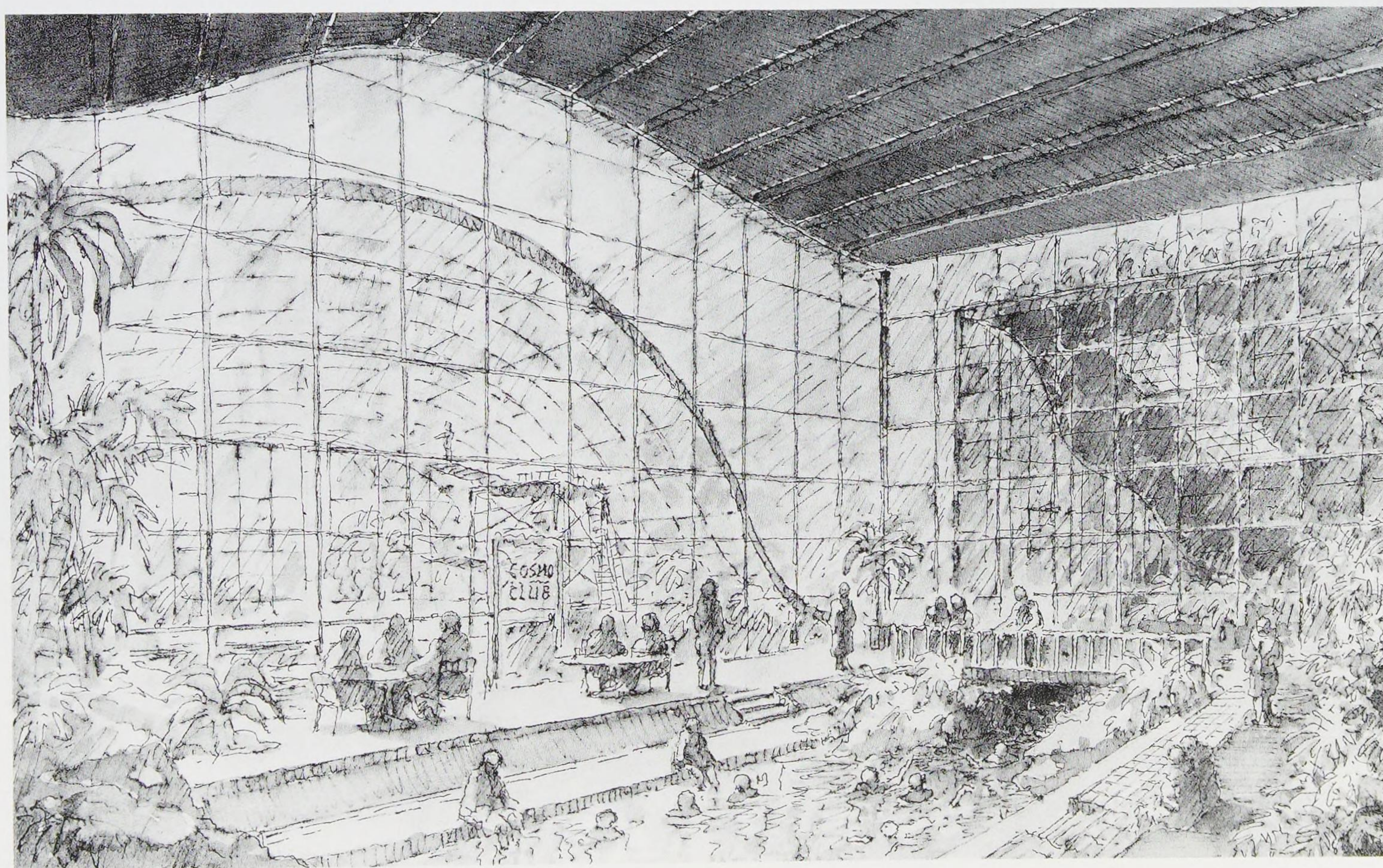
Aerial view of waterfront development proposal



General view of canal and auto museum



General view of waterfront development from harbor



Interior of Aqua Palace

WEST HOLLYWOOD CIVIC CENTER

West Hollywood, California

1987

SITE's concept for the West Hollywood Civic Center reflects the grand landscape tradition of Southern California. It envisions the building as a park, as a "West Hollywood Hill," and as a botanical and geological metaphor for its larger environment.

The structure is a response to a need to unify the site area and to complement the large, glass-enclosed Pacific Design Center complex, which is nearby. The project establishes a strong visual link to PDC without repeating its architectural vocabulary or using competitive vertical elements. In the Civic Center, the glass becomes primarily an iconographic facade. This transparent membrane emphasizes the graceful curve of San Vicente Boulevard while functioning as a terrarium wall to hold back the mounded landscape. The facade is also a contemporary interpretation of Baroque Classicism; but instead of carving decoration *on* the wall, the vegetation and geological strata of the earth become "living ornament" seen *through* the wall. A ring of palm trees (replacing traditional Baroque statuary) crown the semicircular cornice of the plaza facade, and three monumental entrances indicate the main services of the center: city hall, theater, and library.

The Civic Center is a three-level, semicircular structure containing the offices of the local government, a theater, a

library, and a covered parking facility. Completely enclosed by a unified landscape, the configuration is like a massive hillside punctured by architectural elements. The flat areas of the landscape are reserved for recreational facilities, gardens, and a vast lawn. The fire station is also given a special identity due to its location on Robertson Boulevard.

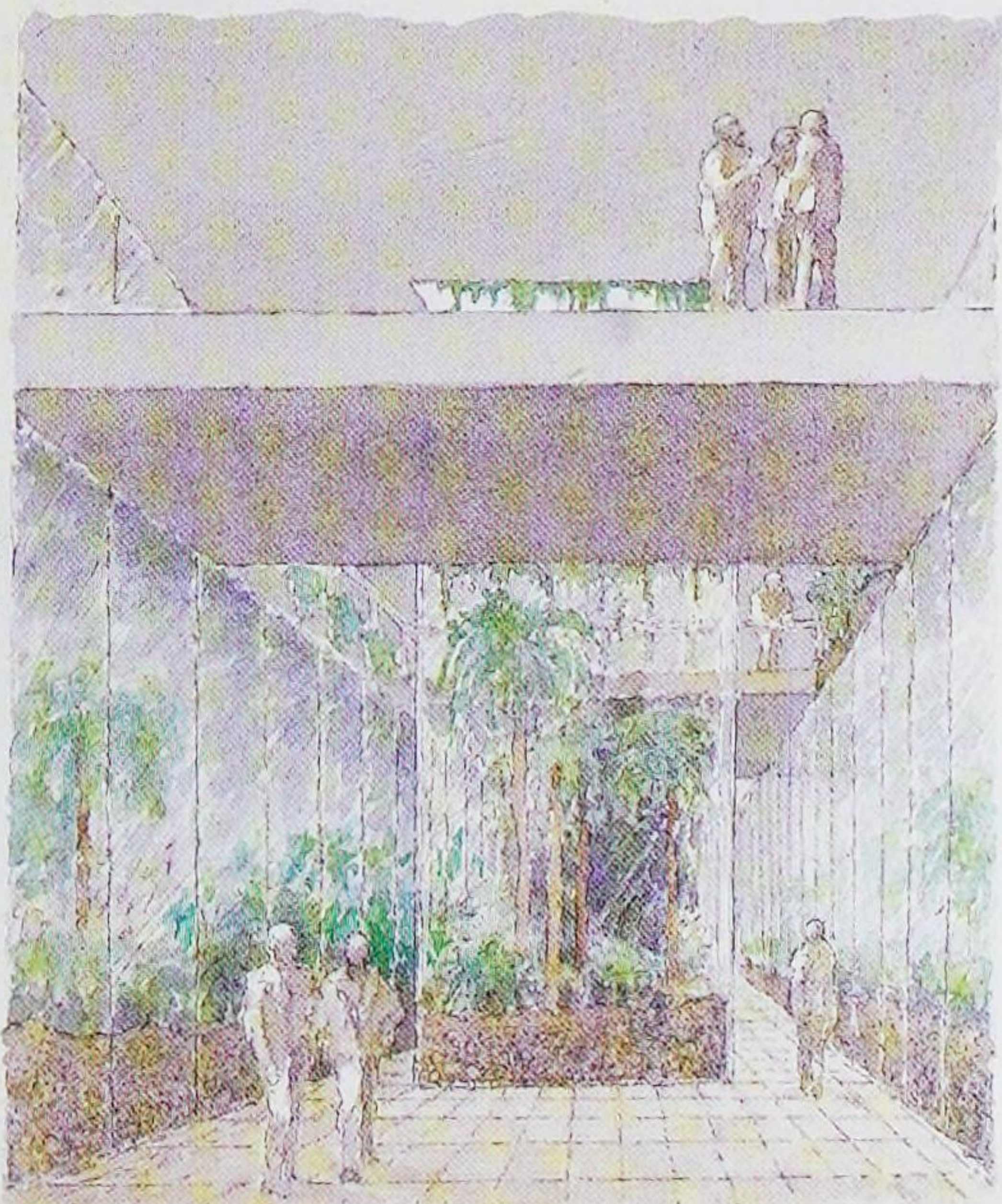
Because of the transparent facades, the open park, and the street-oriented plaza, the concept respects the community's desire for a civic center with a democratic feeling. The space for outdoor community activities is maximized, while the interior is extremely functional but graciously accommodating, with its park views from every office. The plan allows for expansion of services while still maintaining the original landscape-as-building concept.

The extensive use of landscape symbolizes the continuous growth and civic pride of West Hollywood.

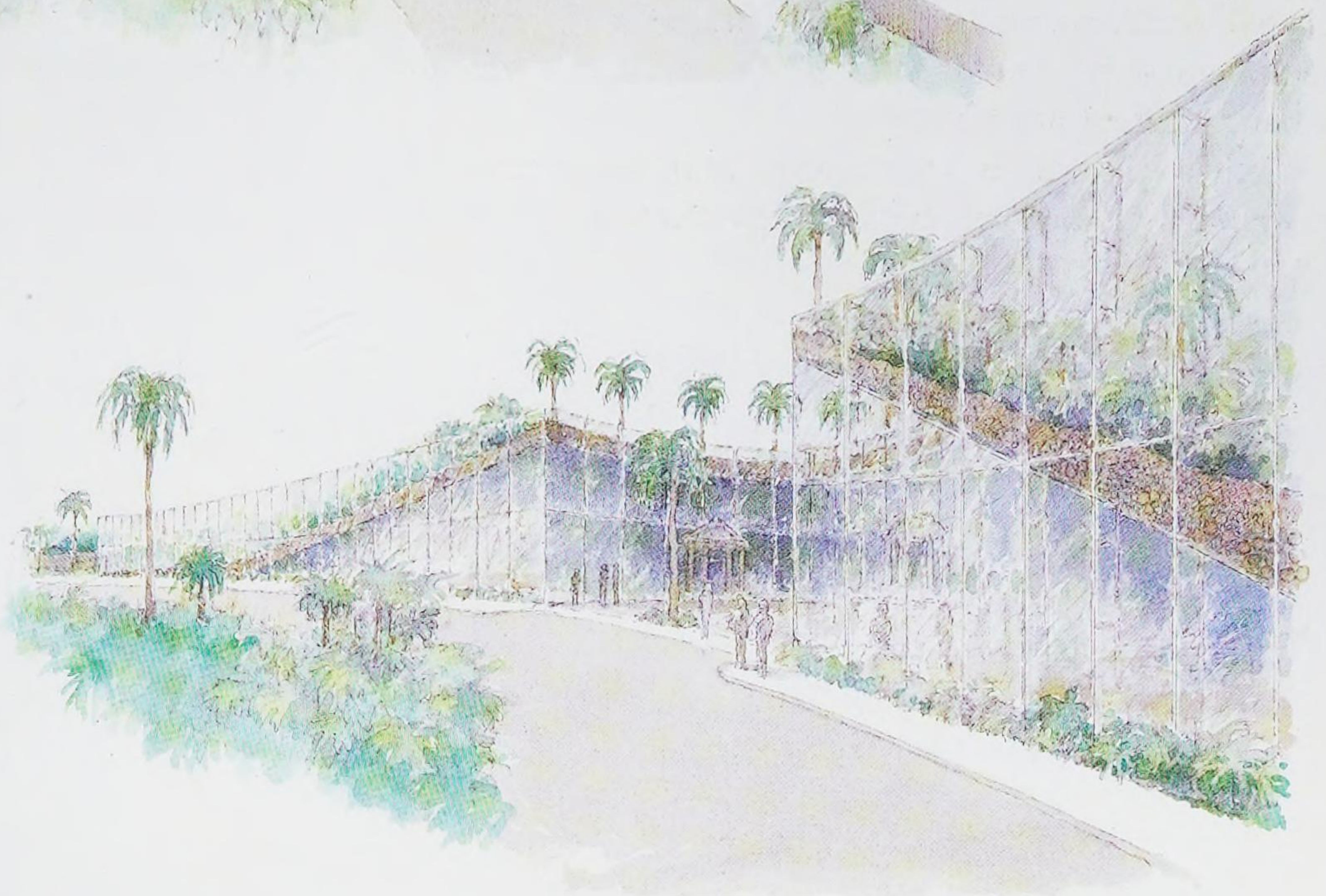
The freestanding glass partition wall can also function as an informational facade for special graphic displays, various kinds of announcements, and video-art works. All of the interior spaces are lit both by conventional windows opening onto terraces and by a series of atriums and light-wells defined by terrarium gardens. The concept reflects the tradition of energy-conserving, earth-sheltered terrace gardens of Southern California.



West Hollywood Civic Center - View looking West



Typical interior with atriums and terrarium walls

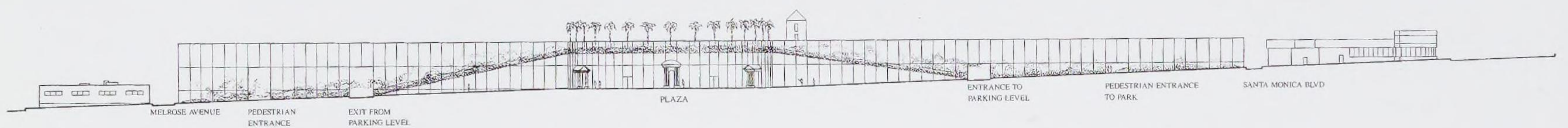


View on San Vicente Blvd. looking South

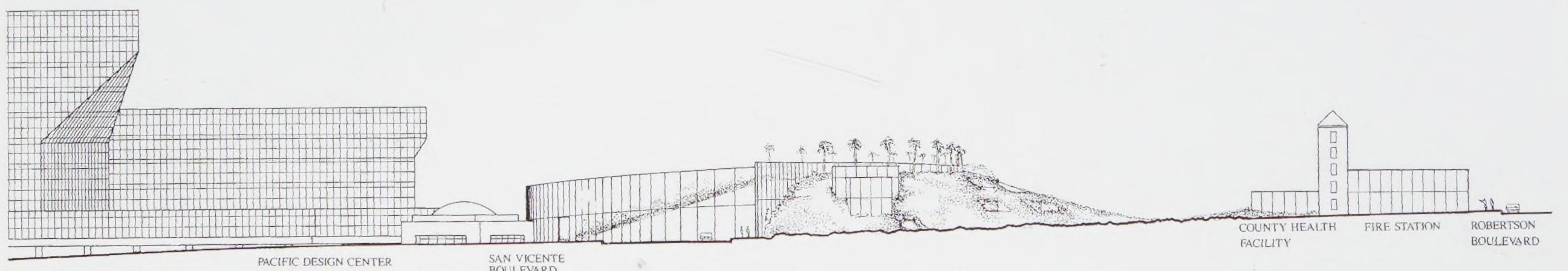
Overview of concept with aerial, interior, and street view



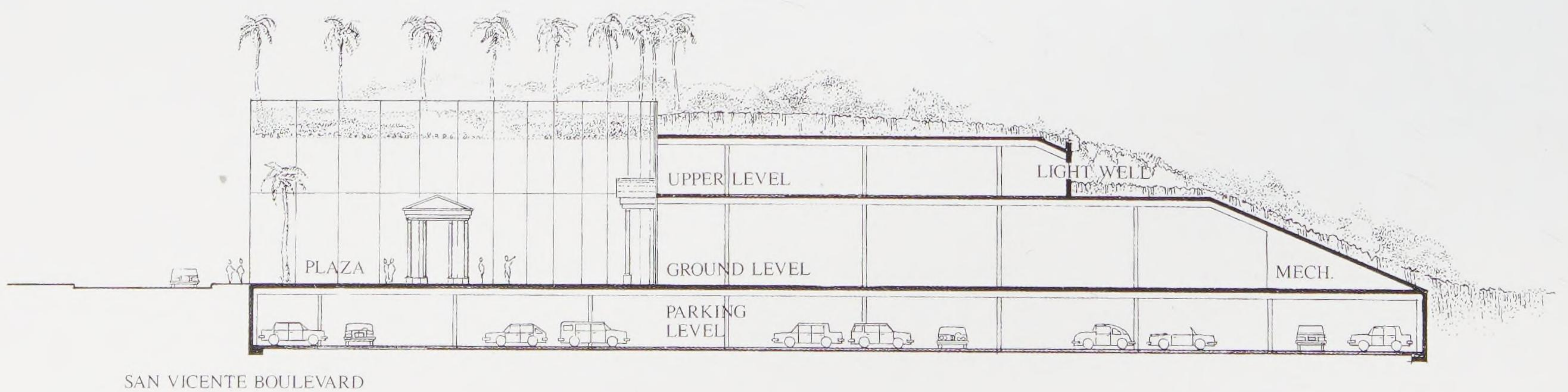
Site plan



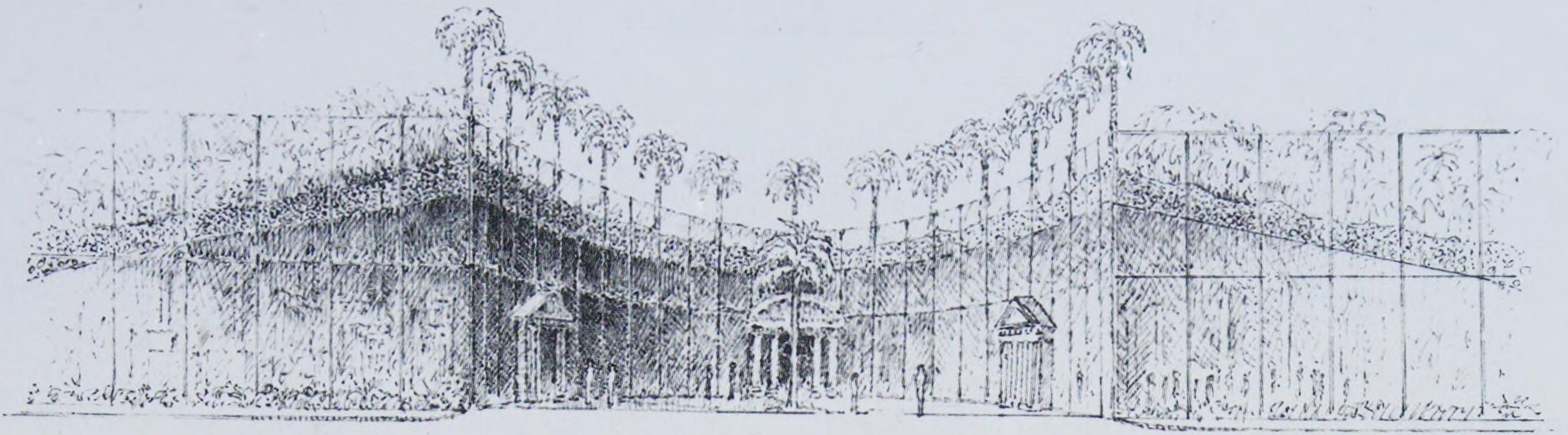
East elevation from San Vicente Boulevard



North elevation from Santa Monica Boulevard



Sections of City Hall building



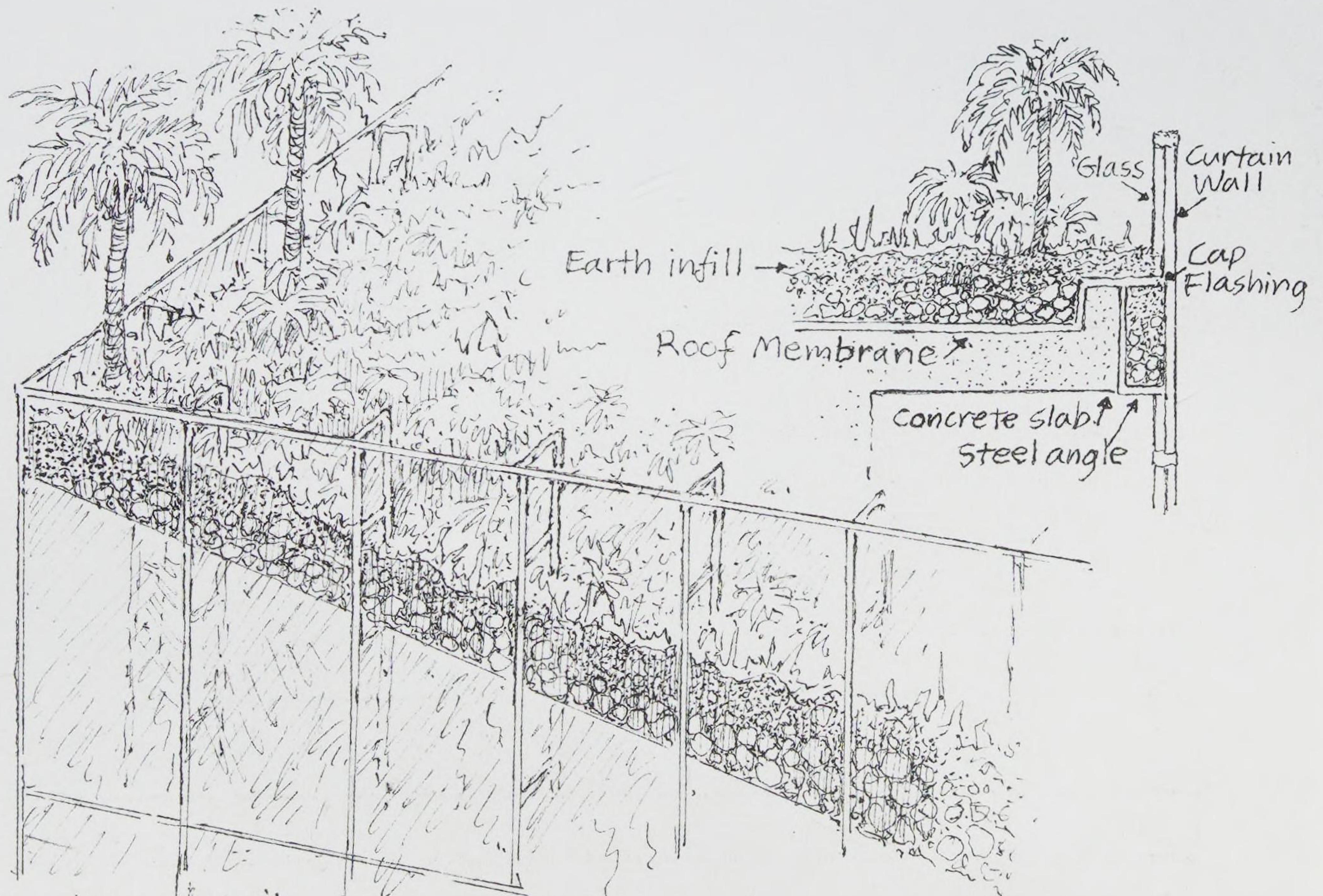
Library

City Hall

Theater

West Hollywood Civic Center Entrance Portals and Plaza

Facade with portal details



Terrarium detail

Detail of terrarium wall and roof

FOUR CONTINENTS BRIDGE

Hiroshima, Japan
1988

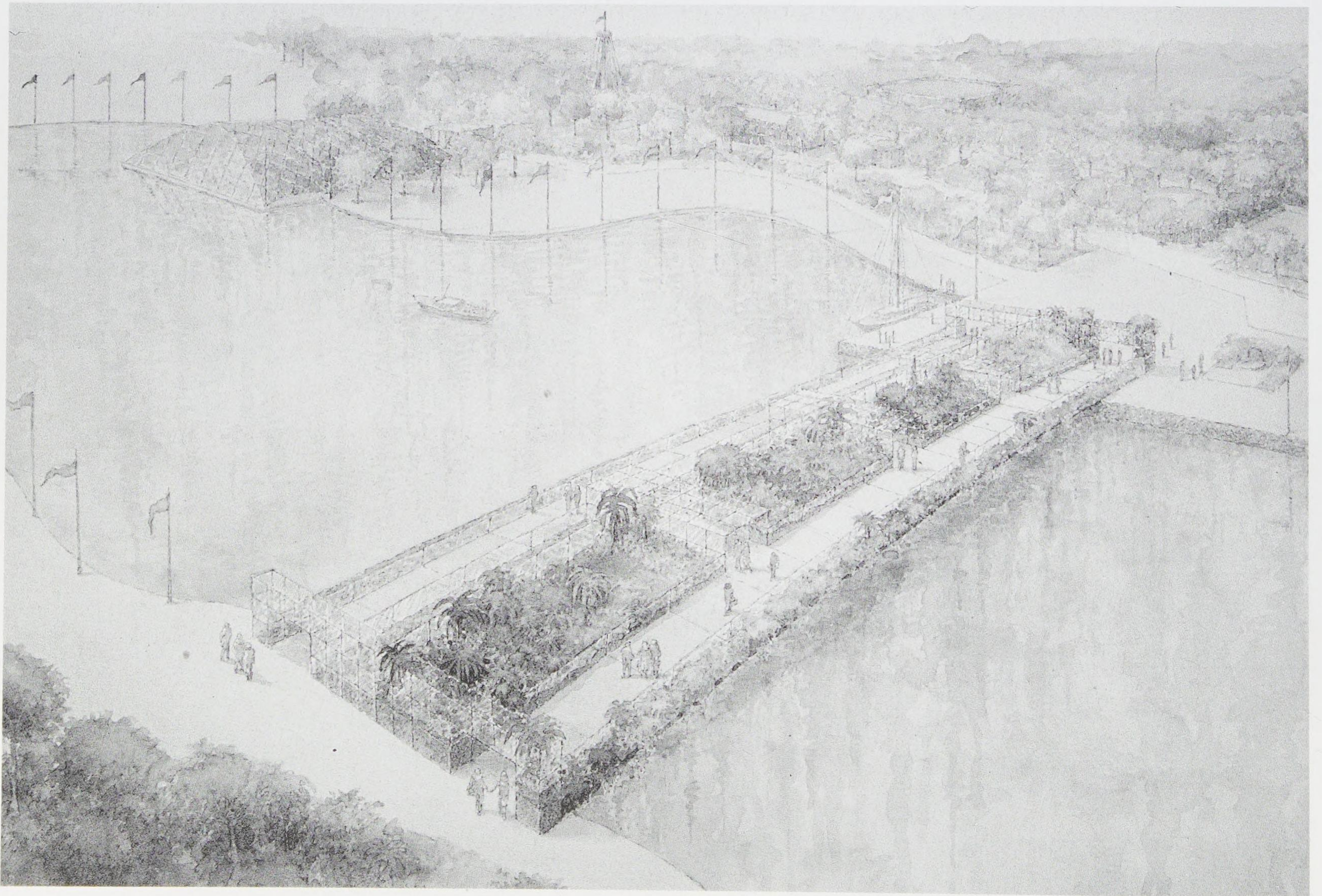
This project is a bridge designed for the Hiroshima Sea and Island Expo, which will take place during the summer and fall of 1989. The pedestrian bridge links two major zones of the fair and is intended to symbolize the connections between land, sea, and people.

The structure, built in steel and concrete, has a gentle curve over the expanse of water, as in traditional Japanese bridge configurations. At the same time, it involves elements of advanced building technology that suggest the future.

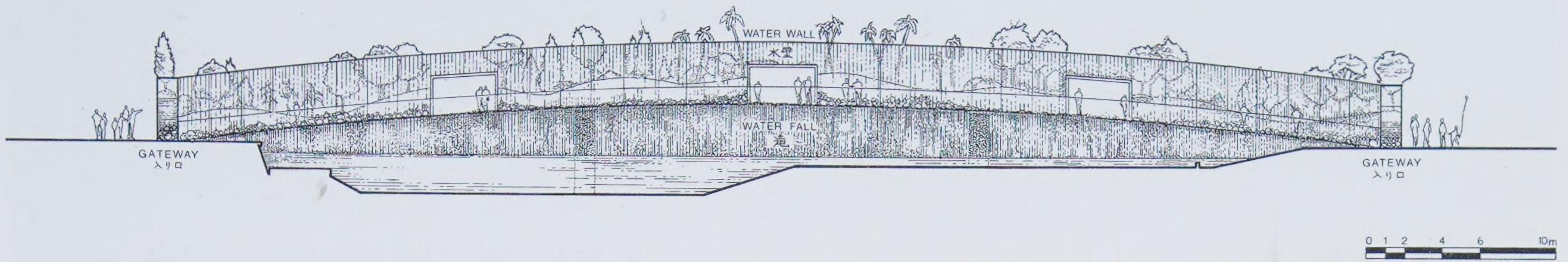
The surface of the bridge is divided by a glass wall punctured by three pedestrian crossways and terminated at both ends by arches, all in glass. On one side of the glass wall, four landscape terrariums containing vegetation typical of the four continents span the entire length of the walkway.

Because the center wall is glass, Expo visitors on the opposite side of the landscape will be able to see layers of earth. Also on this other side, the glass wall is irrigated, forming a vertical waterfall. As the water flows into a horizontal pool under the walkway, it also falls over the edge of the bridge, creating a second waterfall into the lake below. The arches at both ends of the bridge are filled with earth on one half and water on the other half.

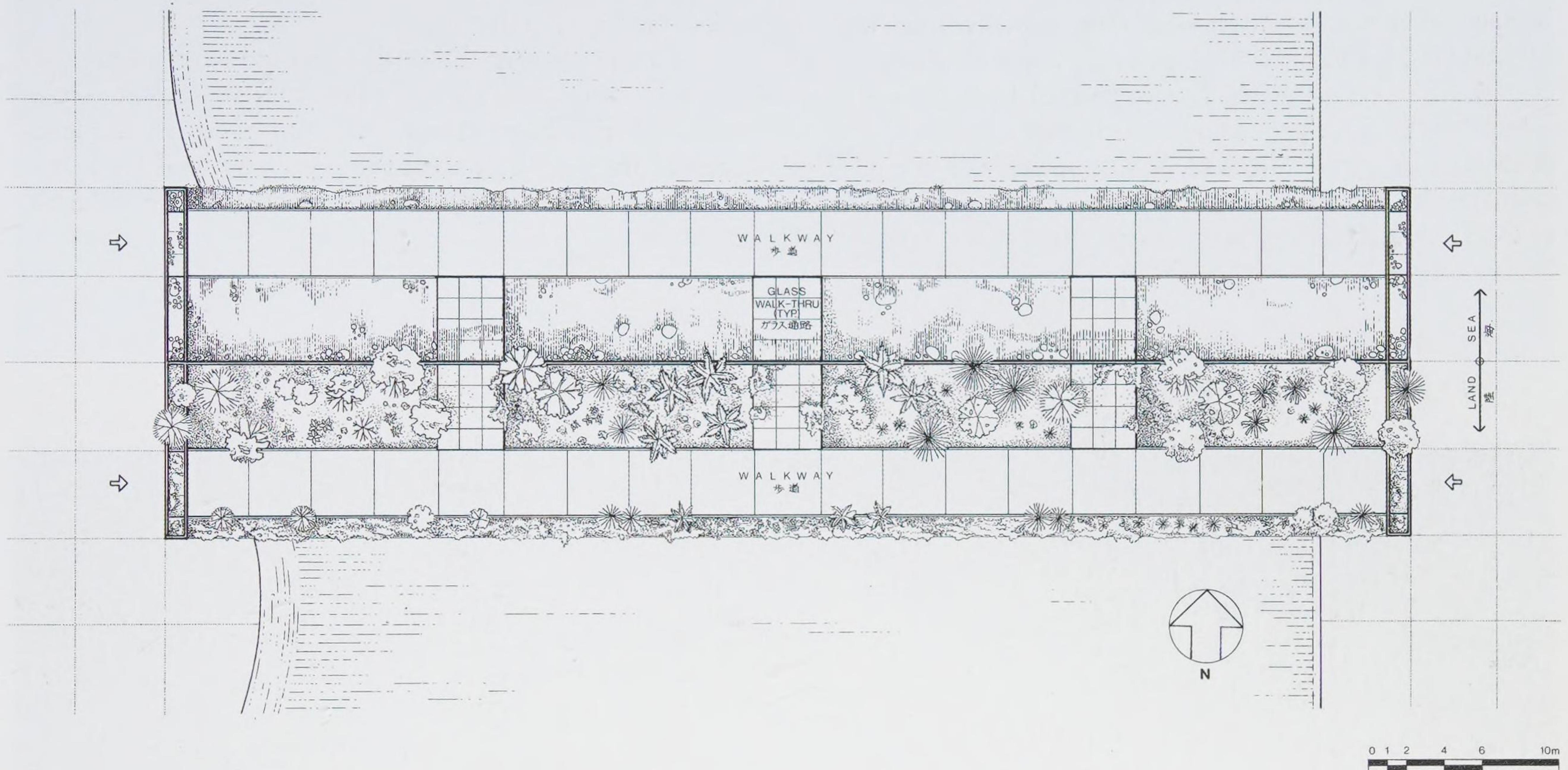
Visitors traversing this bridge, surrounded by either vegetation or water, will be the third element—people—celebrated by the Expo theme. In bringing these elements together, the concept is meant to represent mankind's eternal responsibility to help preserve nature and its valuable resources.



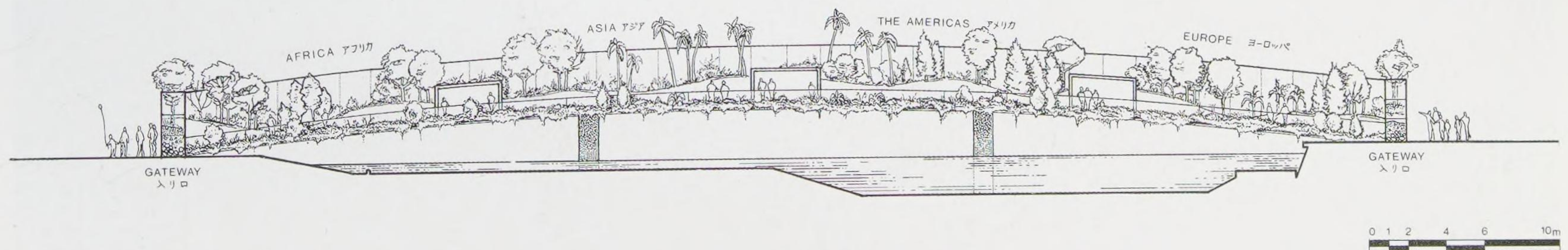
Aerial view of site area



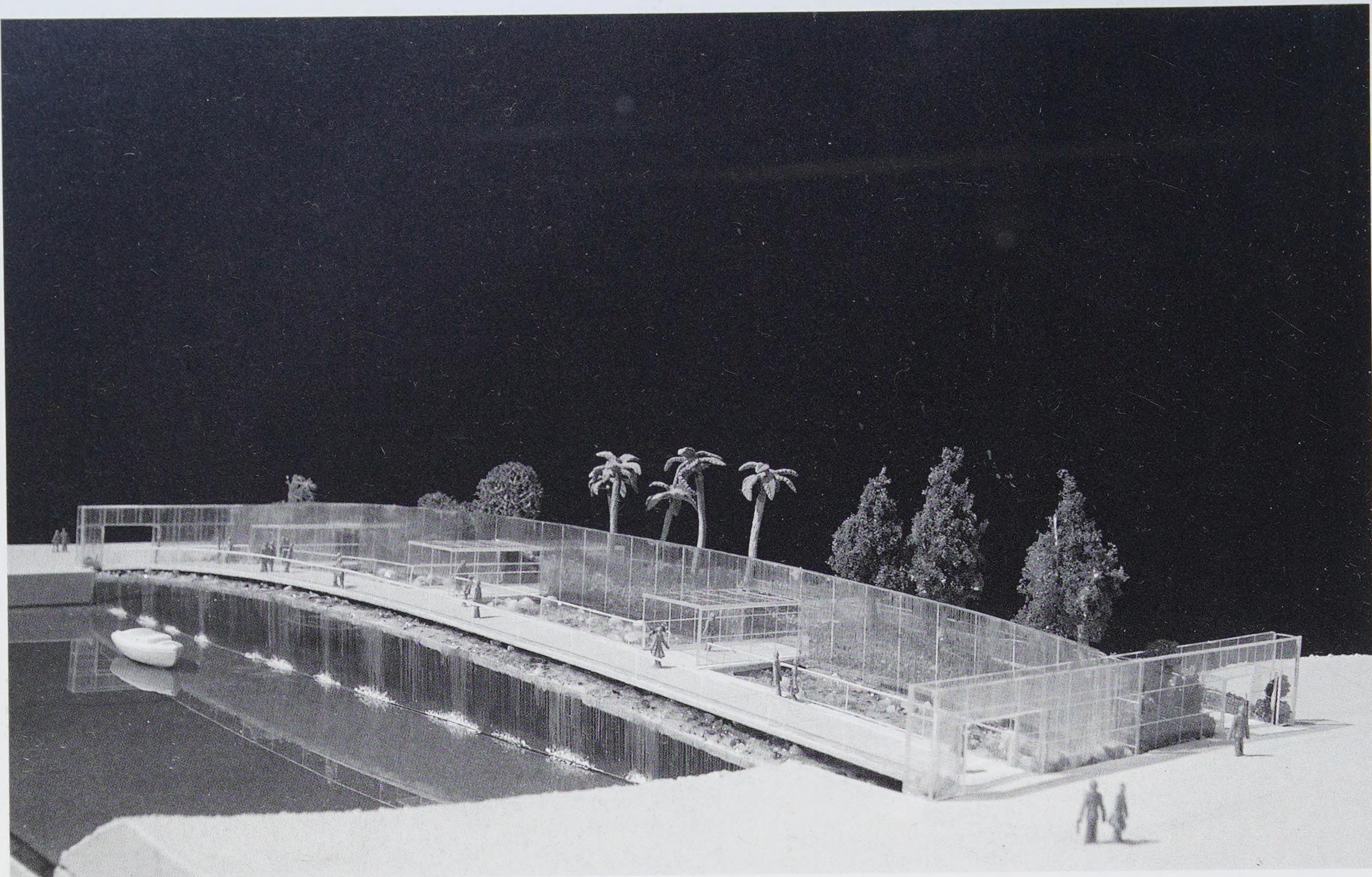
Elevation of sea environments



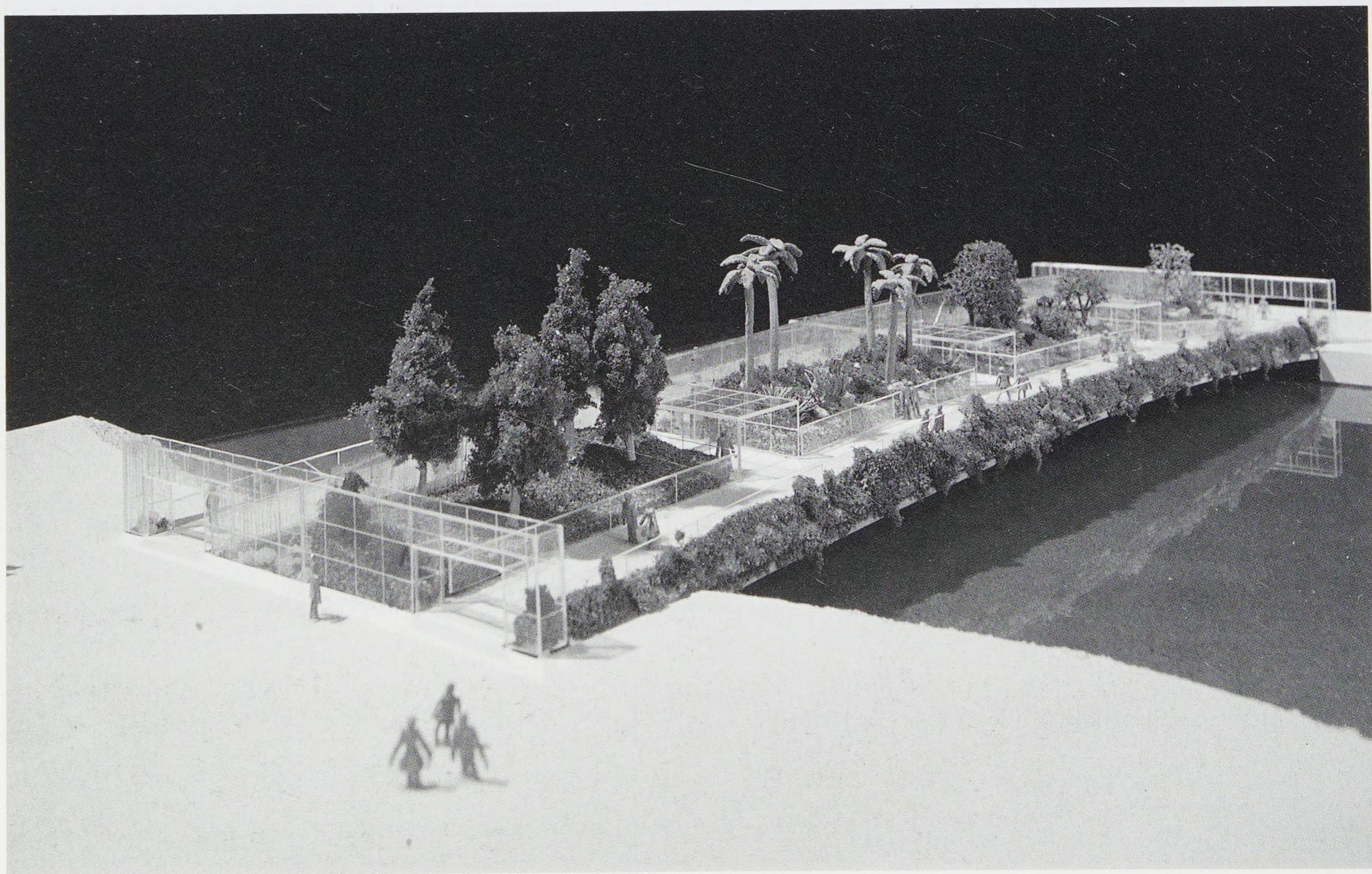
Plan



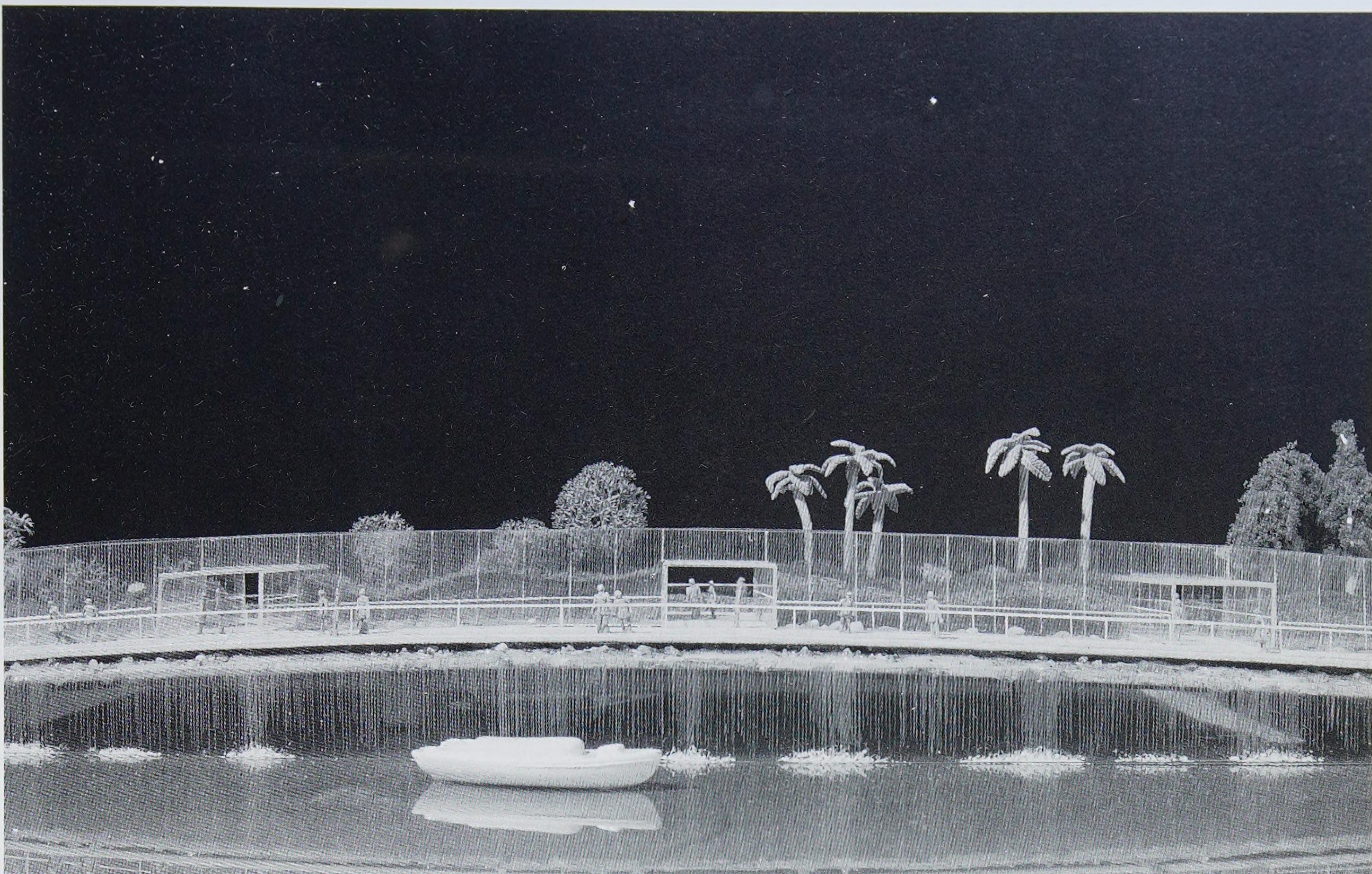
Elevation of land environments



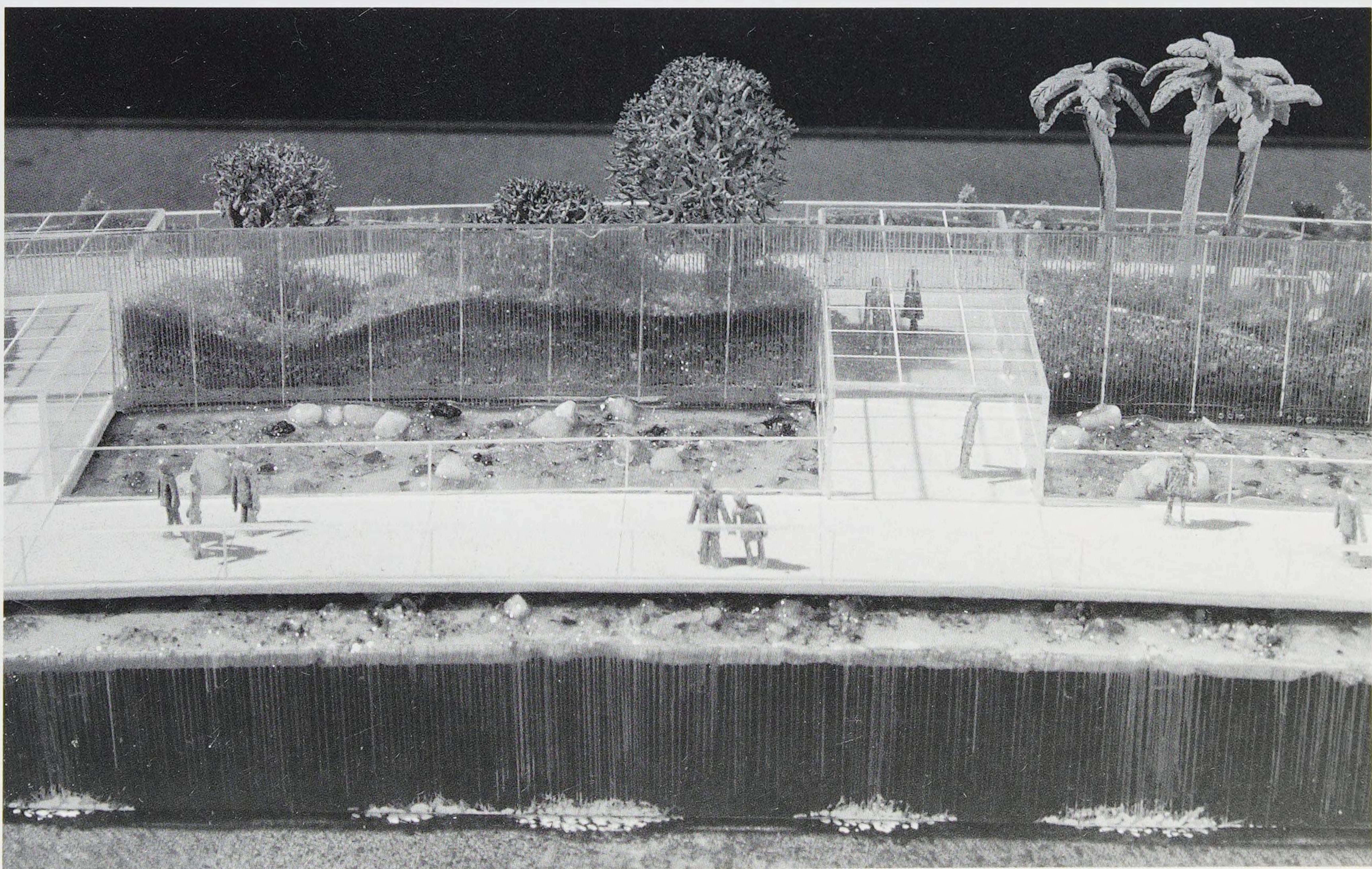
Model of sea environments



Model of land environments



Model of sea environments elevation



Model detail of water wall and terrarium

EXHIBITIONS

The following exhibitions have featured or included the work of SITE.

- 1987–88 “What Could Have Been: Unbuilt Architecture of the '80s.” Traveling exhibition. Grace Designs, Museum Division, Dallas Market Center, Dallas, Texas; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York.
- 1987 “James Wines: Drawings for SITE.” Max Protetch Gallery, New York.
“Museum of the Future.” Documenta 8, Kassel, West Germany. Temporary installation of SITE wall.
“Cities of the Future '87 Exposition.” Gruppo Panorama, São Paulo.
- 1986 “Modern Redux: Critical Alternatives in Architecture for the Next Decade.” Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York. Catalogue.
- 1985–86 “The Critical Edge: Controversy in Recent American Architecture.” Traveling exhibition. Jane Voorhees Zimmerl Art Museum, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey.
“Le Affinite Elettive.” Triennale, Milan. Traveling exhibition. Catalogue.
“Of Space and Time: The Movement Aesthetic.” North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, North Carolina. Catalogue.
“Contemporary Landscape.” Traveling exhibition. National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto; National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo. Catalogue.
- 1985 “Contemporary Terra Cotta Exhibition.” Traveling exhibition. National Building Museum, Washington, D.C. Catalogue.
“The Big Car Show: Contemporary Visions of the Automobile.” Indianapolis Center for Contemporary Art, Indianapolis, Indiana. Catalogue.
“Museum of Modern Art, Frankfurt.” Architectural Association, London. Folio.
“Surface and Ornament.” Miami Metropolitan Museum, Miami, Florida.
- 1984 “BoilerHouse Projects Post-Modern Colour.” Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
“Selections from the Permanent Collection.” Exhibition for the reopening of the Museum of Modern Art, New York.
“The Automobile and Culture.” Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.
“The David Bermant Collection.” Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut. Catalogue.
“Selections from the Permanent Collection.” Exhibition for the opening of the Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt, West Germany. Catalogue.
“SITE.” Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York. Catalogue.
- 1983 “Surface and Ornament.” Castello Sforzesco, Milan.
“Autoscape.” Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.
“1984: A Preview.” Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York.
- 1982 “Utopia and City.” Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, West Berlin. Exhibition installation designed by SITE.
Group exhibition. Stedman Art Gallery, Rutgers University, Camden, New Jersey.
“SITE Buildings for Best.” Beaumont Art Museum, Beaumont, Texas.
- 1981–83 “Highrise of Homes.” Traveling exhibition (installation designed by SITE). Young Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, Illinois; Lopoukhine Gallery, Boston, Massachusetts; Swen Parson Gallery, Northern Illinois University, De Kalb, Illinois; Art and Architecture Gallery, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee; Berkshire Museum, Pittsfield, Massachusetts; Anderson Gallery, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia.
- 1981 “SITE's Projects and Proposals.” Boston Architectural Center, Boston, Massachusetts.
“Artist as Architect/Architect as Artist.” University Gallery of Fine Art, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.
“De-Architecture.” International Cultureel Centrum, Antwerp, Belgium.

- 1980–82 “SITE: Buildings and Spaces.” Traveling exhibition (installation designed by SITE). Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia; Laguna Gloria Art Museum, Austin, Texas; Portland School of Art and Design, Portland, Oregon; Crocker Art Gallery, Sacramento, California; Mandeville Art Gallery, University of California at San Diego, La Jolla, California; Baxter Art Gallery, Pasadena, California; Columbus Art Museum, Columbus, Ohio; Spencer Museum, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas; Sharadin Art Gallery, Kutztown State College, Kutztown, Pennsylvania.
- 1980 “Fantasy Architecture.” American Institute of Architects Foundation, The Octagon, Washington, D.C.
 “Ghost Parking Lot.” Black Cat, Rotterdam, The Netherlands.
 “Architectural Sculpture.” Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Catalogue.
 “Architectural References.” Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Catalogue.
 “Matrix #57: SITE.” Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut. Exhibition installation designed by SITE. Catalogue.
- 1979 “Buildings for Best Products.” Museum of Modern Art, New York. Catalogue.
 “American Now: A Look at the Arts of the '70s.” Traveling exhibition throughout Eastern Europe sponsored by the International Communications Agency, Washington, D.C.
 “Alumni Show.” College of Visual and Performing Arts, Lowe Art Center, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York.
 “For a Better World.” Arts Pavilion, Slovenj Gradec, Yugoslavia.
 “Reality of Illusion.” Denver Art Museum, Denver, Colorado.
 “Metropolis.” Hoch der Kunste, West Berlin.
 “Ruinen Fascination.” Staatlichen Museen Pressiocher, West Berlin. Catalogue.
 “One Thousand Boxes.” Hudson River Museum, Yonkers, New York.
- 1978 Biennale Internationale della Grafica. Venice.
 “L’Art et la Ville.” La Fondation Nationale des Arts Graphiques et Plastiques, Paris. Catalogue.
 “Ornament in the 20th Century.” Cooper-Hewitt Museum, New York.
 “Venerezia.” Palazzo Grassi, Venice. Sponsored by New York University, New York.
 “The Automobile Exhibition.” Amerika Haus, West Berlin. Catalogue.
 “Architecture: Service, Art, Craft.” Traveling exhibition. Rosa Esman Gallery, New York; New Jersey State Museum, Trenton, New Jersey; Muhlenberg College Art Gallery, Allentown, Pennsylvania.
- 1977 “Illusion and Reality.” Traveling exhibition in Australia. Australian National Gallery, Sydney.
- 1976 “Experimental Architecture in North America.” CAYC Museum, Buenos Aires. Catalogue.
- 1975 “Architectures Marginales aux Etats Unis.” Centre Pompidou and the Louvre, Paris. Catalogue.
 Biennale. Venice. Catalogue.
 Group exhibition. Museum of Modern Art, New York.
- 1974 Biennial. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.
- 1973 “SITE.” Department of Architecture, Columbia University, New York.
 “SITE on McDonald’s: The American Landscape.” Inaugural exhibition, Seabord Center, Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Virginia. Catalogue.

AWARDS

- 1988 First Place, Retail Design, for Swatch Nantucket, Ninth Annual *Interiors* Awards
- 1987 Honorable Mention, design competition for City Hall, City of Los Angeles
- 1986 First Place, international design competition for Pershing Square, City of Los Angeles
Award for Excellence in Planning and Design for Laurie Mallet House, Record Houses, *Architectural Record*
- 1985 Best Showroom, for WilliWear Ltd. (men's), Sixth Annual *Interiors* Awards
First Place, design competition for Ansel Adams Center for Friends of Photography
- 1984 First Place, design competition for Here and Now Pavilion, Expo 86
Honorable Mention, design competition for Museum of Modern Art, City of Frankfurt
- 1983 Best Showroom, for WilliWear Ltd. (women's), Fourth Annual *Interiors* Awards
- 1981 Citation, for Perpetual Savings and Loan Bank, 28th Annual *Progressive Architecture* Design Awards
- 1980 International Design Award for Significant Contributions to the Design Standards of Our Man-Made Environment, American Society of Interior Designers
- 1979 International Design Award, American Society of Interior Designers
- 1978 Award for an Outstanding Example of Printing, for the Notch Project packet, Printing Industries of Metropolitan New York, Inc.
- 1977 Award for the design of *Unbuilt America*, Art Directors' Club 56th Annual Exhibition
First Place, Typographical Excellence and Book Composition, for *Unbuilt America*, National Composition Association
- 1972 First Place, "Envirovision" exhibition, Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York
- 1971 Design in Steel Award, Iron and Steel Institute of America

PROJECTS AND COMMISSIONS

- 1988 Four Continents Bridge, Sea and Island Expo Association, Hiroshima, Japan
- Sun and Earth Exposition Center, Cosmo Oil Company, Yokohama, Japan
- Swatch Reception Area and Retail Showroom, Swatch Watch U.S.A., New York, New York
- WilliWear Retail Store, WilliWear Ltd., New York, New York
- 1987 Allsteel Furniture Showroom, Allsteel Inc., IDCNY, Long Island City, New York
- Allsteel Showroom, Route to the Future (temporary installation), Allsteel Inc., IDCNY, Long Island City, New York
- Swatch Retail Store, Swatch Watch U.S.A., Nantucket, Massachusetts
- West Hollywood Civic Center, competition entry, Los Angeles, California
- 1986 Allsteel Showroom, Allsteel Archaeology (temporary installation), Allsteel Inc., IDCNY, Long Island City, New York, and Allsteel Headquarters, Aurora, Illinois
- Denison Parkway Urban Revitalization Scheme, Corning Glass Works, Corning, New York
- Highway '86, winning competition entry, World's Fair Transportation Pavilion and Plaza, Expo '86, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
- Pershing Square, winning competition entry for a downtown plaza, with Kober Cedergreen Rippon, Los Angeles, California
- Theater for the New City, center for performing arts, New York, New York
- Vittel "Iceberg" Bottle, plastic bottle for Vittel Mineral Water Society
- 1985 Ansel Adams Center, winning competition entry, Friends of Photography, Carmel, California
- Frozen Archaeology, contemporary terra-cotta competition, Ludowicki Celedon Corporation
- Glen-Gery Executive Offices, Glen-Gery Corporation, New York, New York
- Laurie Mallet House, residence, New York, New York
- Melting Candlestick, silver candlestick
- New York Brickwork Design Center, Glen-Gery Corporation, New York, New York
- 1984 Inside/Outside Building, catalogue showroom, Best Products Co., Inc., Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- Museum of the Borough of Brooklyn, museum, support spaces, and executive offices, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, New York
- SITE Studio and Offices, New York, New York
- Unique Clothing Warehouse, retail store, New York, New York
- WilliWear Men's Showroom, WilliWear Ltd., New York, New York
- 1983 Bedford House, concept and design for private residence, Bedford, New York
- Floating McDonald's Restaurant, McDonald's Corporation, Berwyn, Illinois
- Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art, competition entry, Frankfurt, West Germany
- Paz Building, adaptive reuse commercial and office complex, Brooklyn, New York
- WilliWear Executive Offices, WilliWear Ltd., New York, New York
- WilliWear Boutique, Harrod's Department Store, WilliWear Ltd., London, England
- 1982 House with Floating Walls, concept for private residence, New York, New York
- Space Station, video games center, Just Games Inc., New York, New York
- WilliWear Women's Showroom, WilliWear Ltd., New York, New York
- 1981 Famolare Shoe Showroom, concept and design for prototype interior, New York, New York
- Highrise of Homes, concept for highrise housing
- 1980 Forest Building, catalogue showroom, Best Products Co., Inc., Richmond, Virginia
- Prototype Bank, concept for Perpetual Savings and Loan Association, Rapid City, South Dakota

- Prototype Store, concept for the General Store, Washington, D.C.
- 1979 Cutler Ridge Showroom, catalogue showroom, Best Products Co., Inc., Miami, Florida
- Hialeah Showroom, catalogue showroom, Best Products Co., Inc., Hialeah, Florida
- 1978 Best-Anti Sign Distribution Center, Best Products Co., Inc., Ashland, Virginia
- Ghost Parking Lot, plaza and environmental sculpture, National Shopping Centers, Inc., Hamden Plaza, Hamden, Connecticut
- Terrarium Showroom, catalogue showroom, Best Products Co., Inc., South San Francisco, California
- 341 Madison Avenue, renovation project, Vector Real Estate Corporation, New York, New York
- 1977 Notch Showroom, catalogue showroom, Best Products Co., Inc., Arden Fair Shopping Mall, Sacramento, California
- 1976 Parking Lot Showroom, concept for catalogue showroom, Best Products Co., Inc., Richmond, Virginia
- Tilt Showroom, catalogue showroom, Best Products Co., Inc., Eudowood Shopping Mall, Towson, Maryland
- 1975 Indeterminate Facade Showroom, catalogue showroom, Best Products Co., Inc., Almeda-Genoa Shopping Center, Houston, Texas
- Molino Stucky Venice Biennale Project, Giudecca Island, Venice, Italy
- 1974 Platte River Rest Stop, concept for Interstate 80, Nebraska
- Society of Four Arts, plaza competition entry, Palm Beach, Florida
- York Rest Stop, concept for Interstate 80, Nebraska
- 1973 Courtyard Project, Intermediate School 25, New York, New York
- 1972 Binghamton Dock, concept for State Street park and pedestrian mall, Binghamton, New York
- Peeling Project, catalogue showroom, Best Products Co., Inc., Richmond, Virginia
- 1971 Peekskill Melt, concept for Crossroads Apartments, Peekskill, New York
- Physics-Astronomy Plaza, concept for University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin
- 1970 Education Place, plaza concept, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa
- 1969 Environmental Art Project, Everson Museum of Art plaza, Syracuse, New York
- Environmental Art Project, Metropolitan Opera House, south wall plaza, Lincoln Center, New York

PROJECT CREDITS

The projects illustrated are credited below in alphabetical order. The page number for text and illustrations is indicated in parentheses.

Allsteel Archaeology, 1986

International Design Center of New York, Long Island City, NY, and Allsteel Headquarters, Aurora, IL

Client: Allsteel Inc.

Designers: SITE

Installation: Donna Brueger, John Gunnison-Wiseman

General contractor: Gordon Construction Corp.

Status: Built (p. 190)

Allsteel Furniture Showroom, 1987

International Design Center of New York, Long Island City, NY

Client: Allsteel Inc.

Architects: SITE

Consulting engineers: Geiger/KKBNA (structural); Mariano D. Molina (mechanical and electrical)

Lighting design: Jules Fisher and Paul Marantz, Inc.

Artifact installation: Architectural Sculpture Assoc.

General contractor: Gordon Construction Corp.

Status: Built (p. 226)

Allsteel Route to the Future, 1987

International Design Center of New York, Long Island City, NY

Client: Allsteel Inc.

Designers: SITE

Artifact installation: Donna Brueger

General contractor: Gordon Construction Corp.

Status: Built (p. 194)

Ansel Adams Center, 1985

Carmel, CA

Client: The Friends of Photography

Architects: SITE

Structural engineers: Weidlinger Assoc.

Status: Unbuilt (p. 176)

Bedford House, 1983

Bedford, NY

Private client

Architects: SITE

Status: Unbuilt (p. 148)

Best Cutler Ridge Showroom, 1979

19600 South Dixie Highway, Miami, FL

Client: Best Products Co., Inc.

Architects: SITE

Associated architects: Johnson Assoc. Architects, Inc.

Structural engineers: Weidlinger Assoc.

General contractor: Whiting-Turner Contracting Co.

Status: Built (p. 100)

Best Forest Building, 1980

Richmond, VA

Client: Best Products Co., Inc.

Architects: SITE

Landscape: Watkins Nurseries, Inc.

Consulting engineers: Weidlinger Assoc. (structural); La Prade Brothers (electrical)
General contractor: Whiting-Turner Contracting Co.
Status: Built (p. 110)

Best Hialeah Showroom, 1979

5301 West 20th Avenue, Hialeah, FL
Client: Best Products Co., Inc.
Architects: SITE
Structural engineers: Weidlinger Assoc.
Landscape: Fluker Lawn Care Service
General contractor: Whiting-Turner Contracting Co.
Status: Built (destroyed) (p. 108)

Best Indeterminate Facade Showroom, 1975

Almeda-Genoa Shopping Center, Kingspoint and Kleckley Streets, Houston, TX
Client: Best Products Co., Inc.
Architects: SITE
Associated architects: Maples-Jones Assoc.
Structural engineers: Weidlinger Assoc.
General contractor: Conceptual Building Systems
Status: Built (p. 98)

Best Inside/Outside Building, 1984

West Brown Deer Road, Milwaukee, WI
Client: Best Products Co., Inc.
Architects: SITE
Associated architects: Keeva Kekst Assoc.
Consulting engineers: John Bowes and Assoc. (structural); V.A. Lombardi and Assoc. (mechanical and electrical)
Arcade installation: M.F.I. Inc.; Mettleworks, Gene Olson (sculpture); Creative Services International, Inc.
General contractor: Hunzinger Construction Co.
Status: Built (p. 150)

Best Notch Showroom, 1977

Arden Fair Shopping Center, 1901 Arden Way, Sacramento, CA
Client: Best Products Co., Inc.
Architects: SITE
Associated architects and engineers: Simpson/Stratta Assoc.
Engineer for Wandering Wall: Allied Engineering and Production Corp.
General contractor: Rudolf and Sletten, Inc.
Status: Built (p. 104)

Best Parking Lot Showroom, 1976

Client: Best Products Co., Inc.
Architects: SITE
Status: Unbuilt (p. 114)

Best Peeling Project, 1972

5400 Midlothian Turnpike, Richmond, VA
Client: Best Products Co., Inc.
Concept: SITE
Consulting engineers: Mario Salvadori, William J. Davis
General contractor: Taylor and Parrish
Status: Built (p. 106)

Best Terrarium Showroom, 1978

South San Francisco, CA
Client: Best Products Co., Inc.
Architects: SITE
Status: Unbuilt (p. 116)

Best Tilt Showroom, 1978

Eudowood Mall, Goucher Boulevard, Towson, MD
Client: Best Products Co., Inc.
Architects: SITE
Consulting engineers: Weidlinger Assoc. (structural); Scherr, Kopelman Assoc.; Construction Concepts (electrical)
General contractor: Whiting-Turner Contracting Co.
Status: Built (p. 102)

Door within a Door within a Door within a Door within a Door within a Door, 1986

Designers: SITE

Status: Under development (p. 174)

Floating McDonald's Restaurant, 1983

Cermak Plaza, Harlem Avenue and Cermak Road, Berwyn, IL
Client: McDonald's Corporation
Architects: SITE
Consulting engineers: Weidlinger Assoc. (structural); Air Distribution Assoc. (mechanical)
Lighting: Incorporation Consultants Co., Ltd.
General contractor: Walter Daniels Contractors Inc.
Status: Built (p. 146)

Four Continents Bridge, 1988

Hiroshima, Japan
Client: Sea and Island Expo Association
Architects: SITE
Structural engineers: Geiger Engineers
Landscape: Signe Nielsen
Waterworks consultant: Georgia Fountain Co.
Lighting: Quentin Thomas Assoc.
Status: Under construction (p. 242)

Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art, 1983

Intersection of Domstrasse, Berlinerstrasse, and Braubachstrasse, Frankfurt, West Germany
Client: The Municipality of Frankfurt
Architects: SITE
Consulting engineers: Weidlinger Assoc. (structural); Lehr Associates (mechanical)
Status: Unbuilt (p. 138)

Frozen Archaeology, 1985

Client: Ludowicki Celedon Corp.
Designer: SITE
Tile designer: H. Stow Chapman
Status: Under development (p. 172)

Ghost Parking Lot, 1978

Hamden Plaza Shopping Center, Hamden, CT
Client: National Shopping Centers, Inc.
Designers: SITE
General contractor: Depersia Masonry Contractors, Inc.
Status: Built (p. 120)

Highrise of Homes, 1981

Architects: SITE
Status: Unbuilt (p. 128)

Highway '86 Processional, 1986

1986 World Exposition, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Client: Expo '86
Concept, design, and project management: SITE
Architect: Boak Alexander
Exhibit contractor: Ebco Industries
Structural engineer: Geiger Assoc.
General contractor: Halse-Martin Construction
Status: Built (p. 204)

Laurie Mallet House, 1985

New York, NY
Client: Laurie Mallet
Architects: SITE
Structural engineers: Geiger Assoc.
Lighting consultant: Bob Davis, Inc.
Artifacts: C.S.I. Inc.; M.R.A. Assoc.
General contractor: Gordon Construction Corp.
Status: Built (p. 196)

Melting Candlestick, 1985

Designer: SITE
Status: Produced and distributed (p. 184)

Molino Stucky Venice Biennale Project, 1975

Giudecca Island, Venice, Italy
Client: Venice Biennale of Art and Architecture
Architects: SITE

Status: Unbuilt (p. 118)

Museum of the Borough of Brooklyn, 1984

Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, NY

Client: Museum of the Borough of Brooklyn

Architects: SITE

Consulting engineers: Berkenfeld-Getz & Assoc. (structural); Lehr Assoc. (mechanical and electrical)

Consultants: Howard Brandston Lighting Designs, Inc.; Exhibitgroup (SITE WALL™ contractor)

General contractor: Gordon Construction Corp.

Status: Built (p. 180)

New York Brickwork Design Center, 1985

211 East 49th Street, New York, NY

Client: Glen-Gery Corp.

Architects: SITE

Consulting engineers: Mariano D. Molina (mechanical and electrical); Berkenfeld-Getz & Assoc. (structural)

Lighting consultant: Quentin D. Thomas

General contractor: Gordon Construction Corp.

Status: Built (p. 158)

Paz Building, 1983

179 Marcy Avenue, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, NY

Client: Paz Holding Corp.

Architects: SITE

Consulting engineers: Weidlinger Assoc. (structural); Lehr Assoc. (mechanical and electrical)

Status: Unbuilt (p. 168)

Perpetual Savings and Loan Association Bank, 1980

Various cities in South Dakota

Client: Perpetual Savings and Loan Assoc.

Architects: SITE

Status: Unbuilt (p. 124)

Pershing Square, 1986–87

Los Angeles, CA

Client: Pershing Square Management Assoc.

Architects: SITE with Kober Cedergreen Rippon

Consulting engineers: Delon Hampton, Geiger Assoc. (structural);

Tsuchiyama & Kaino (mechanical); Nikolakopolus & Assoc. (electrical);

George Sexton Assoc. (lighting)

Landscape: EDAW, Inc.; Burton & Spitz

Status: Under development (p. 214)

SITE Studio and Offices, 1984

Bayard-Condict Building, New York, NY

Architects: SITE

Consulting engineers: Mariano D. Molina (mechanical and electrical)

General contractor: Gordon Construction Corp.

Status: Built (p. 164)

Sun and Earth Exposition Center, 1988

Yokohama, Japan

Client: Cosmo Oil Co.

Architects: SITE

Status: Unbuilt (p. 236)

Swatch Retail Store, 1987

Nantucket, MA

Client: Parallel Marketing Corp. for Swatch Watch, U.S.A.

Architects: SITE

Special design consultant: Alan Goldin

Retail design consultant: Baymiller Studio

Figure installation: Architectural Sculpture Assoc.

Status: Built (p. 222)

Theater for the New City, 1986

First Avenue and 10th Street, New York, NY

Client: Theater for the New City

Architects: SITE

Consulting engineers: Lehr Assoc. (mechanical and electrical);

Weidlinger Assoc. (structural)

Theater consultant: Jules Fisher Assoc.

Acoustic consultant: David Kahn

Lighting consultant: Quentin Thomas Assoc.

Construction manager: JGN Construction Corp.

Status: Under development (p. 186)

Vittel “Iceberg” Bottle, 1986

Client: Société des Eaux Minérales de Vittel

Designer: SITE

Status: Limited edition produced (p. 185)

West Hollywood Civic Center, 1987

West Hollywood, CA

Client: The City of Hollywood (competition sponsor)

Architects: SITE with Kober Cedergreen Rippon

Status: Unbuilt (p. 238)

WilliWear Offices and Showrooms, 1982

209 West 38th Street, New York, NY

Client: WilliWear, Ltd.

Architects: SITE

Showroom installation: Architectural Assoc. (men’s); Ken Cosentino (women’s)

General contractor: Gordon Construction Corp.

Status: Built (p. 132)

WilliWear Retail Store, 1988

New York, NY

Client: WilliWear Ltd.

Architects: SITE

Consulting engineers: Jetmatrix (electrical); Kaback Enterprises (mechanical)

Lighting design: Kruger Assoc.

Interior landscaping: Madelyn Simon & Assoc.

Ivy installation: Donna Brueger, Jane Millett

General contractor: Gordon Construction Corp.

Status: Built (p. 232)

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SITE PARTNERS

Alison Sky is a co-founding partner of SITE and, from the beginning of the group, has been actively involved with the conceptual development of projects. A recipient of fellowships from the American Academy in Rome and the National Endowment for the Arts, she is also the founder and co-editor of SITE's publication department. In this capacity she produced a series of eight magazines and books, including the 1976 book entitled *Unbuilt America*, which records a 200-year history of unrealized architecture in the United States. Educated as an artist and writer, Sky has been a partner-in-charge of such SITE projects as the Laurie Mallet House, the SITE Studio and offices, the WilliWear showrooms, sets and video scenarios for MTV Music Television, and an international series of Swatch Watch shops.

Michelle Stone has been a partner of SITE since 1970. Trained in psychology and sociology at New York University, she has been primarily responsible for new business development, administration, and project coordination. As co-editor and photographer for the "ON SITE" series of publications, Stone worked on eight books and magazines, including *Unbuilt America*. She was responsible for establishing SITE's photography department and archive, which includes more than ten thousand examples of architecture and environmental phenomena. During the past decade, Stone has acted as partner-in-charge for the Paz Building, the Museum of the Borough of Brooklyn, and Highway '86 at Vancouver's Expo '86.

Joshua Weinstein joined SITE in 1982 and became a partner in 1987. Educated at Pratt Institute School of Architecture, he is a registered architect in New York State and produced award-winning adaptive reuse and preservation projects with Mowry Architects before his association with SITE. Weinstein is responsible

for the coordination and translation into architectural documents of all of SITE's projects to insure a successful fusion of the arts. He is also involved in concept development and construction management. Weinstein has been partner-in-charge of such projects as the Best Products Inside/Outside Building in Milwaukee, the Glen-Gery Brickwork Design Center in New York City, the Floating McDonald's Restaurant in Berwyn, Illinois, and Highway '86 at Vancouver's Expo '86.

James Wines is a co-founding partner of SITE. His essays and projects have become identified internationally with conceptual and experimental architecture. During the 1960s he worked in Rome for ten years as a sculptor, creating a number of monumental works as part of architectural contexts. He was educated at Syracuse University in art and art history and became involved with architecture on a full-time basis with the formation of SITE in 1970. Since that time he has published extensively in the professional journals of twenty-five countries, lectured at more than 800 colleges, universities, and professional conferences, and exhibited his drawings and models for SITE at galleries and museums in America and abroad. Wines has received fellowships and awards from the Pulitzer Fund, the American Academy in Rome, the Ford Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation, the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts. His writing projects include a recent book entitled *De-Architecture* on the philosophy of SITE's work, and he presently serves as Chairman of Environmental Design at Parsons School of Design in New York. Wines has been responsible for many project concepts, including the Best Products showroom series, the Paz Building, the Highrise of Homes, the Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art, the Allsteel Showroom, and Pershing Square.

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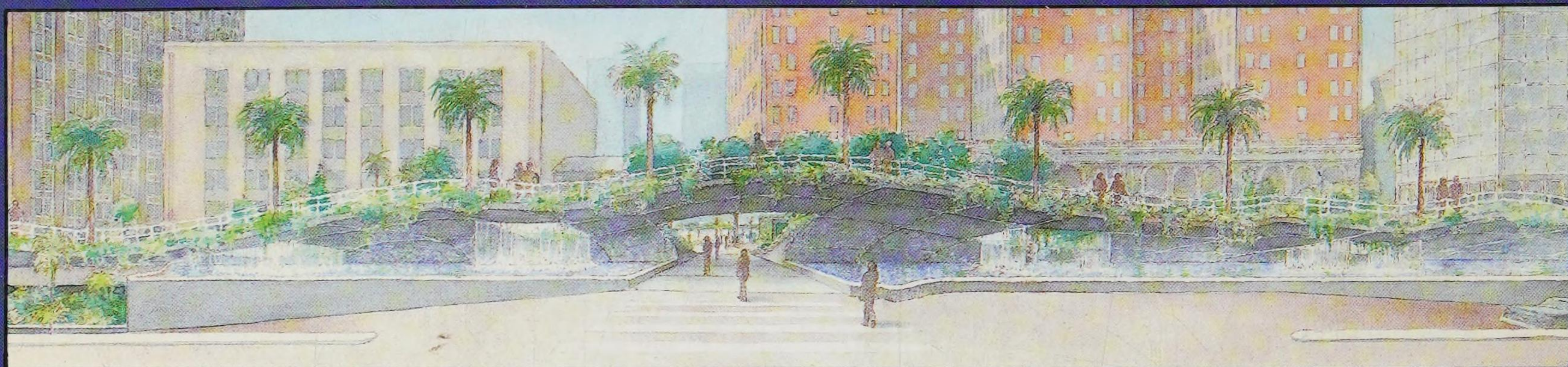
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